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Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-020 *31 January 1995*

CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Writer Views U.S. 'Dual Containment' Strategy *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 22 Dec]* 1

Arab-Israeli Talks

Autonomy Negotiator: Palestinian Authority Has Failed *[AFP]* 3
Sha'th: Palestinian-Israeli Talks Remain on Hold *[AFP]* 3

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Sends Message to Clinton on Peace, Ties *[Jericho VOP]* 4
'Arafat: All Palestinians Fight for Same Cause *[THE JERUSALEM POST 30 Jan]* 4
PA Condemns Israeli Raid on E. Jerusalem College *[Jerusalem Radio]* 4
Students Protest Raid *[Jerusalem Radio]* 4
'Arafat Addresses Rally *[Jericho VOP]* 4
PA's Quray' on 'Grave' Results of Israeli Policy *[Cairo International]* 5
PA Opens Comptroller's Offices in Gaza, Ramallah *[Jerusalem Radio]* 6
New Political Movement Announced in Gaza *[MENA]* 6
Jihad Seeks 'Military Coordination' With Hamas *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 27 Jan]* 6
Islamic Jihad Leader Justifies Use of Suicide Bombers *[London THE INDEPENDENT 30 Jan]* .. 7
Islamic Jihad Figure Discusses Israeli Measures *[Tehran Radio]* 8
Hizballah, PFLP-GC Leaders Mock Clinton's Actions *[VOL]* 9
'Abbas Urges Larger Russian Role in Peace Process *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 28 Jan]* 9
'Urayqat Criticizes Rabin's Statements on Elections *[Jericho VOP]* 9
Urges Quicker Accord Implementation *[Jerusalem Radio]* 10

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

President Zeroual To Invite Observers to Election *[Algiers Radio]* 11
Zeroual Foresees Free, Democratic Elections *[Algiers Radio]* 11
Government Asks Libya To Clarify al-Fazzani Comment *[Algiers Radio]* 12
Reportage on Car Bomb Blast in Central Algiers 12
French Press Overview *[AFP]* 12
Further Details Reported *[Algiers TV]* 13
Madani's Son Acquitted of Forming Armed Group *[Paris International]* 13
Progress Achieved in Talks With World Bank, IMF *[Algiers Radio]* 13

Egypt

Mufti Urges 'Jihad' Against 'Zionist Enemy' *[AL-SHA'B 24 Jan]* 13
Minister: U.S. Freezing of Assets 'Positive' *[MENA]* 14
Musa: Damascus Declaration Ministers To Meet 5 Feb *[MENA]* 14
Mubarak Phones Husayn, Rabin, 'Arafat on Peace *[MENA]* 14
Libya's Yunus Meets Mubarak, Ends Visit to Egypt *[MENA]* 14
PLO's Qaddumi Arrives, Speaks on Israel 'Obstacles' *[MENA]* 14
President Mubarak Discusses Peace Process *[Cairo Radio]* 15
'Terrorist' Shot in Court in Attempt To Seize Gun *[MENA]* 15

Mauritania

Prime Minister Boubacar Defends Recent Arrests *[Paris International]* 16
Foreign Minister Lekhel on Nouakchott Riots *[Algiers Radio]* 16
Germany Signs Financial Cooperation Agreement *[Nouakchott Radio]* 16

Tunisia

Imprisoned Islamic Leader Dies of Hemorrhage *[Paris International]* 16
Parties To Participate in Municipal Elections 17
Renewal Movement To Take Part *[Tunis Radio]* 17
Socialist Democrats To Take Part *[Tunis TV]* 17

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Saudi-Yemeni Talks Enter 'Decisive Stage' *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 30 Jan]* 18

Bahrain

Amir Hails Egyptian Position on 'Incidents' *[WAKH]* 18
Amir Receives Syrian Foreign Minister, Message *[WAKH]* 19
Cabinet Satisfied With Security Situation *[WAKH]* 19
UK-Based Opposition Groups Oppose 'Medieval' System
[London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 27 Jan] 19

Saudi Arabia

Council of Ministers Briefed on Yemen Negotiations *[SPA]* 20

Yemen

Salih Rules Out Use of Force in Border Dispute *[AFP]* 20
Grenades Thrown at Russian Embassy in Sanaa *[AFP]* 21
Opposition Front Names Leaders, Assigns Duties *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 27 Jan]* 21
Oil Minister Discusses Natural Gas Developments *[London AL-HAYAH 19 Jan]* 21

IRAQ

Envoy Urges United Arab Stance on NPT Signing *[MENA]* 24
Airspace 'Violations' Reported to Arab League *[INA]* 24
Saddam, Commanders Discuss Equipment, Training *[Baghdad Radio]* 24
Saddam Chairs Revolution Command Council Meeting *[INA]* 24
Saddam Chairs Cabinet Meeting, Hails Patience *[Baghdad Radio]* 24
SAIRI Head Views Saddam Trial, Refugees, Embargo *[Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution]* 24
West Said To Support SAIRI Plan To Oust Saddam *[Voice of Iraqi People]* 25

ISRAEL

Return of 'Arava Land to Jordan Completed *[Jerusalem Radio]* 26
Peres Expects 'No Real Changes' on NPT Disagreement *[Jerusalem Radio]* 26
'Unilateral' Move on NPT Said Under Consideration *[HA'ARETZ 31 Jan]* 26
Rally Speakers Call For Suspending Peace Talks *[HA'ARETZ 29 Jan]* 27
Commentary Assails Christopher Over Syrian Talks *[HA'ARETZ 30 Jan]* 27
Trade Ministry Readies for Fight Against U.S. Demands
[YEDI'OT AHARONOT (MAMON supplement) 31 Jan] 28
Police Discuss Separation Plan; Data on Attacks *[THE JERUSALEM POST 30 Jan]* 28
Likud Split on West Bank Plans; Eytan on 'Arafat Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 29
Settlers, IDF Clash Over West Bank Outpost 29
Settlers Seize Evacuated Post *[Jerusalem Radio]* 29
IDF Declares Post Closed Military Area *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Palestinians Said To Recruit 'Collaborators' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30

'Terrorists' Sentenced for Fatal Attacks 30
Life Imprisonment for Bethlehem Attack *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Life Plus 10 Years for 'Afula Attack *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Security Forces Arrest 13 'Radical' Activists *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Longer Administrative Detentions Approved *[Jerusalem TV]* 30
No-Confidence Vote on Sabbath Desecration Defeated *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Government Cancels Stock Market Capital Gains Tax *[Jerusalem Radio]* 31

JORDAN

Israeli Forces Withdraw From Southern Areas *[Amman Radio]* 32
King, Mubarak on Achieving Comprehensive Peace *[Amman TV]* 32
King Husayn Addresses War College on Peace *[Amman TV]* 32
Discusses Arab Ties, Other Issues *[Amman TV]* 33
Various Jordanian-Palestinian Accords Published 37
General Agreement on Cooperation *[AL-RA'Y 29 Jan]* 37
Administrative Affairs Agreement *[AL-DUSTUR 29 Jan]* 38
Trade Agreement *[JORDAN TIMES 29 Jan]* 39
Monetary, Banking Agreement *[AL-DUSTUR 29 Jan]* 39
Cultural, Information Agreement *[AL-DUSTUR 29 Jan]* 41
Education Agreement *[AL-DUSTUR 29 Jan]* 41
Post, Telecommunications Agreement *[AL-DUSTUR 29 Jan]* 42
Protocol on Mail Cooperation *[AL-DUSTUR 29 Jan]* 42
Indian Medicines Enroute to Iraq Via Amman *[JORDAN TIMES 29 Jan]* 43

LEBANON

Israeli Shelling, Resistance Operations Reported *[VOL]* 45
Israeli, SLA Activities in South Reported *[RFL]* 45
Nasrallah: Anti-Israel Operations To Continue *[VOL]* 45
'Resistance' Detonates Explosive Device Under Lahd Patrol *[VOL]* 45
Hizballah Claims Attack on SLA Position *[VOL]* 45
'Zionist' Sabotage Networks Uncovered in Beirut *[Tehran Radio]* 45
UN Security Council Extends UNIFIL Mandate 6 Months *[VOL]* 46

SYRIA

Writer: Netanya, al-Shaqaqi Fuel Tension With U.S. *[London AL-HAYAH 28 Jan]* 47
Jordanian Opposition Leaders Delegation Visits 48
Delegation Arrives in Damascus *[Damascus Radio]* 48
Khaddam, al-Ahmar Meet Delegation *[Damascus Radio]* 48
Mashariqah Meets Delegation *[Damascus Radio]* 48
Ba'th Official Meets Delegation *[Damascus Radio]* 49
Delegation Members Comment on Visit *[Damascus TV]* 49
Delegation Commends Peace Stand *[Damascus Radio]* 50
Al-Asad Reportedly Asks Arabs To Lift Iraq Embargo *[AL-MAJD 30 Jan]* 51

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Rabbani Addresses Peace Process in Ramadan Speech *[Kabul Radio]* 52
Heavy Fighting Continues Despite UN Meeting *[Radio Message of Freedom]* 52
HCC Begins 'Clearing Up' Operations in Konduz *[Radio Message of Freedom]* 53
HCC Forces Capture Konduz Air Field *[Radio Message of Freedom]* 53

Bangladesh

Donors' Criticism of 'Slow' Reforms Refuted *[AFP]* 53

India

Envoy Denies Firms Aid Iranian Poison Gas Plant *[Delhi Radio]* 54
Japan To Provide Grant for Education, New Bridge *[Delhi TV]* 54
Official: Intelsat Accord 'Milestone' in Space Program *[Delhi Radio]* 54
Ministry Rejects Privatization of Electronic Media *[Delhi Radio]* 54
Article Says Indicators Point to Economic 'Boom' *[BUSINESS STANDARD 28 Jan]* 54
Economic Adviser Interviewed on Debt Situation *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 29 Jan]* 55
Congress-I Withdraws Support for Uttar Pradesh *[Delhi Radio]* 56
Draft Resolution for CPI-M Congress Reported *[THE STATESMAN 29 Dec]* 57
Rao Interviewed on Singh, Election Prospects *[THE PIONEER 25 Jan]* 57
Papers Speculate on Status of Prime Minister Rao 59
Support From Ministers *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 26 Dec]* 59
Sonia Gandhi's Influence *[THE SUNDAY STATESMAN 18 Dec]* 59
Survey Results *[DECCAN CHRONICLE 26 Dec]* 60

Iran

Commentary Notes 'Right' To Use Nuclear Energy *[Tehran International]* 61
Editorial Insists on Need for Nuclear Energy *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 22 Jan]* 62
Press on U.S. Reaction to Caspian Sea Oil Deal *[IRNA]* 62
Azerbaijan Report: Iran Largest Trade Partner *[IRNA]* 64
UK Invites Central Bank To Begin Debt Talks *[IRNA]* 64
New Air Force Chief on Equipment Show, Future *[Tehran Radio]* 64
IRGC Ground Forces Commander Interviewed *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 21 Jan]* 65
'Precautionary' Border Measures Being Taken *[IRNA]* 67
Majles Urges Enforcement Against Illegal Imports *[IRNA]* 67
Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri on Domestic Issues *[ABRAR 16 Jan]* 67
March to Russian Embassy Protests Chechnya *[IRNA]* 69

Sri Lanka

Government Approves Iranawilla VOA Relay Station *[THE PIONEER 25 Jan]* 69
Foreign, Industrial Ministers Depart for U.S. *[Colombo International]* 70
LTTE Demands Dismantling of Military Camp *[LANKAPUVATH 28 Jan]* 70

Writer Views U.S. 'Dual Containment' Strategy

95LH0064A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Dec 94 p 8

[Article by Anwar Majid Ashqi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh—Geographical location creates the history of a nation. It could be the source of blessing, trouble, or both. The Arab Gulf throughout the ages has been a point of considerable friction between political forces with vital interests, concealing their aspirations to dominate the area. Besides its oil, the Arab Gulf enjoys an important strategic location and geopolitical advantages that make it a center of conflict in the world. The Gulf is a partially closed sea, extending from al-Faw, in the north, to the Straits of Hormuz, in the south. It is characterized by the absence of navigational obstructions. It is distinguished by the numerous islands that dot its surface and control its maritime routes. Many coves exist within the Gulf, providing protection and shelter to warships and nuclear submarines. The Arab Gulf is the crossroads for international communications between continents, particularly the African, Asian, and the European. It also has one of the most important straits in the world, which controls oil shipping through Hormuz and links with the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea.

The discovery of oil has made the Gulf an important energy source. It controls the wheel of progress, particularly in Europe and Japan. The world only realized this importance in the wake of the October 1973 war and the world energy crisis. Many thought that the Gulf's strategic importance would diminish following the collapse of the Soviet Union, because the area was not threatened any more with occupation and there was no more need to maintain a link between the vital bases in Southeast Asia and the NATO bases in Europe that formed a formidable line behind the former Soviet Union. However, strategists knew that the area's strategic importance would not diminish, even under the new world order. They knew that the Soviet retreat is temporary, dictated by current developments, that Moscow still has the nuclear capability to destroy the United States and the Western European countries, and that it has maintained its strategic and political importance.

The geographical and demographical situation in the area is tilting the strategic balance in favor of Iran. While the Arabs are exposed, because of the desert terrain, Iran is formidable, because of the mountains that stretch along the Iranian coast and provide natural defense against an invasion. The Zagros mountain range also constitutes a launching and observation point in the direction of the Arab coast. The Arab states suffer from low population. They also suffer from migration, which is upsetting the demographical balance and posing a national, political, social, economic, and military threat to the Gulf states. Iran, on the other hand, enjoys good population density and limited immunity against an invasion. This equation prompted the administration of former President Nixon to give Iran, during the Shah's era, the role of policeman in the area to fill the vacuum created by the British withdrawal from the Gulf and east of Suez in 1971. It created the impression that Iran has the right to defend the Gulf and maintain its hegemony over it.

The Carter administration recognized the changes that took place in Iran. The United States then regarded any attempt to dominate the Gulf as a direct aggression against vital U.S. interests, and Washington warned it would confront any aggression by all available means. Based on the Carter strategy, the United States established the Rapid Deployment Forces. The countries of the region were reluctant to cooperate seriously with the Carter strategy, prompting Washington to turn to Israel. The United States boosted Israel's strategic importance, giving it the right to take quick action to deal with any threat against the area. This is the reason the United States overlooked Israel's growing nuclear capability. The United States changed its policy of maintaining a military balance between the Arabs and Israel to supporting Israeli qualitative superiority over the Arabs. While the security vacuum in the area led the United States to adopt the Carter strategy, the Iranian threat to the area strengthened the strategic ties between the United States and Israel. These ties were strengthened further following a speech former Soviet President Brezhnev delivered in the Indian parliament in 1979. In this speech, he naively said that no military bases or nuclear weapons should exist in the Gulf and the adjacent islands. He opposed the use of force, interference in the affairs of the Gulf states, and dragging the Gulf area into military alliances involving nuclear states. He called for respecting the policy of nonalignment chosen by these states and respecting their sovereignty and resources.

Democrat Carter departed from the White House, leaving behind many principles and few deeds. The Republicans Reagan and Bush succeeded him, bringing many deeds and few principles. The hostages' issue was settled with Iran. The war then broke out between Baghdad and Tehran, and continued for eight years. When it ended and the countries of the region were able to catch their breath, the ruling regime in Baghdad invaded Kuwait. The Republicans, who adopted the policy of maintaining the balance and supporting one of the sides, were able to drive Iraq out of Kuwait, but maintained its strength and unity so it would not be weak in the face of Iran.

Clinton's Republican [as published] administration could not outline a new strategy and followed in the footsteps of its predecessors. This prompted the Republicans to challenge the Clinton administration's foreign policy. They accused Clinton of political naivete and of being a good talker about political tactics and avoiding talking about strategic analysis. Political analysts support the Republicans' viewpoint. The speeches of President Clinton and his secretary of state about the Middle

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East did not go beyond offering political ideas. They contained no fresh views reflecting profound political understanding.

These criticisms prompted Martin Indyk, head of the Middle East Division in the National Security Council, to come out with a strategy he called "dual containment." It won the support of many officials. Today he is a national security adviser. In March 1993, a seminar was held in the U.S. Congress on U.S. policy in the Middle East. George McGovern, head of the council for Middle East policy, chaired the seminar. He gave the chance to Indyk to elaborate on his "dual containment" strategy. Political gurus thought that this was a strategic policy devised by the U.S. administration to contain Iraq and Iran. Strategic analyst Gregory Goss [name as transliterated] reacted to it in an article under the headline "The Irrationality of Dual Containment," published in FOREIGN AFFAIRS magazine in March 1994. However, Iraq's recognition of Kuwait and its international borders reinforced Indyk's strategy.

The "dual containment" strategy does not disregard the balance of power theory in the region. It is based on it. Iraq and Iran pursue a hostile policy against the United States, because U.S. policy in the past was based on supporting one side against the other. The United States supported the Shah's government against Iraq. After the revolution, it supported Iraq against the Iranian leadership. Iraq misinterpreted this support, and turned against the Gulf, threatening its security and stability. This is what prompted Indyk to come out with his "dual containment" strategy. He realized that the policy of supporting one of the two countries was disastrous. He thought that maintaining the balance is necessary to safeguard the interests of the United States and the area's states until "dual containment" becomes possible.

Indyk explained the reasons that led to this strategy. He summed it up as follows: The absence of the Soviet Union, as a superpower, removed the strategic worries in the American equation for the area and tipped the scale in favor of the United States. The Iraqi war provided an opportunity to establish a regional balance of forces between Iraq and Iran with small military resources. The absence of the Soviet Union from the arena and the balance game provided an opportunity to the area's states to enter into previously unacceptable security arrangements with the United States. These facts helped broaden the strategic framework, extending the balance to the entire Middle East and making it possible for the United States to depend on the big friendly countries in the area. This also made it possible for efforts to be made to establish peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors, and thus lend support to the dual containment policy in the area. Indyk thought that peace in the Middle East would strengthen the friends of the United States in the Arab world and help to isolate Iran and Iraq. He also thought that it was possible to deal a strategic blow to Iran if it were to attempt to undermine security in the area and spread its influence in it. Furthermore, peace would deprive Saddam Husayn of much of his ability to exploit the Palestinian issue to achieve his ambitions.

Iraq's recognition of Kuwait has been comfortable to all the parties and confusing to the international community. It divided the international community into two groups. One group thought Iraq should be rewarded for its decision to recognize Kuwait by easing the UN sanctions against it. This group is led by Russia and France. The two states maintained strong trade relations with Baghdad before the recent Gulf war and wanted to remove the obstacles as soon as possible. The United States and Britain led the other group, which opposes lifting the sanctions against Iraq unless it fulfills all the UN Security Council's conditions. The United States and Britain are sticking to paragraph 21 of Resolution 787, which stipulates that the sanctions will be reconsidered in the light of the Iraqi policies and actions, including its implementation of all the UN resolutions. White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers confirmed this when she said: Iraq must abide by other elements of the UN resolutions, including releasing the political prisoners, returning looted property to Kuwait, and getting rid of its armament program.

The Iraqi president faced Kuwait and the Security Council in October 1994 with the challenge that the Iraqi political leadership cannot be trusted. UN Resolution 687 calls for the need to obtain guarantees that Iraq's intentions are peaceful, and this is what Russia and France are sticking to. Iraq's recognition of Kuwait's borders and its sovereignty over its territory took place four days before the UN Security Council was due to review the economic sanctions against Iraq and two days before a meeting of the Gulf defense ministers in Riyadh. The recognition came after the sanctions had started bearing fruit and hurting the Iraqi Government. Monetary inflation led to a deterioration in the value of the Iraqi dinar. The rate dived from 3.3 to 800 Iraqi dinars to the U.S. dollar. This has made the dinar lose its purchasing power and has affected the lives of Iraqi citizens. This also has caused grumbling in the Army and the Republican Guard, prompting many soldiers to desert and join the Kurds.

Iraq's recognition of Kuwait was not motivated by good intentions nor was it made in response to the UN resolutions. It was the result of an initiative by Russia, who has begun thinking about regaining its role as a big power. Russia wanted to return to the international arena through the Iraqi gate. One of its eyes was focusing on Iraq's debts to Moscow, which are estimated at $7 billion, and the other eye on investment and preferential treatment deals that would become available after the problem is solved. The initiative did not come from Russia itself. Russian Foreign Minister Kosyrev's statements before the initiative were hostile to Iraq and in line with the U.S. view on a settlement. But the talks between Clinton and Yeltsin in October 1994 gave Russia the chance to undertake this initiative.

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Washington knew that undertaking such a role with the Iraqi leadership would be difficult for any European state. It felt that it had acted more vigorously in the Middle East than necessary and gotten into a dilemma, especially after it realized that the movement of forces by Iraq was no more than a political demonstration to vitalize the political situation. The Russian initiative was not undertaken with American encouragement only, but was consistent with the green light it received from Baghdad following the talks held by President Yeltsin's personal envoy Igor Ivanov.

Moscow outlined its objectives before it undertook its initiative, making its goal the achievement of Iraqi recognition of Kuwait and the release of Kuwaiti prisoners. This is what Kosyrev said before he left Baghdad. He also said that Moscow did not wish to return to its previous policies. Kosyrev undertook a Gulf tour to explain the Russian Government's views, provide assurances, and win support. Russia used the Gulf card to the utmost to appear as a peacemaker and establish a foothold in the area. The United States is nearing the fulfillment of its new "double containment" strategy by winning Iran over and subduing Iraq.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Autonomy Negotiator: Palestinian Authority Has Failed

NC3001222495 Paris AFP in English 1630 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, Jan 30 (AFP)—The key Palestinian architect of the PLO-Israeli autonomy accord has charged that the Palestinian self-rule Authorities have failed so far to implement the agreement.

"The premises (of the agreement) are not encouraging so far," Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu-Mazin, told the London-based Arabic-language weekly AL-MAJALLA received Monday [30 January] in Beirut.

"I'm opposed to current measures, to repression and the muzzling of the press as well as other security measures implemented daily in the autonomous territories," said 'Abbas.

"I'm not a member of the (Palestinian) opposition but I must state clearly so as not to be misunderstood that the Palestinian self-rule Authorities have failed," he added.

'Abbas, who is a member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's executive committee, stressed that his 35-year-old friendship with PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat was still strong.

"But this does not mean that we can't disagree on methods," he said.

Last week 'Abbas called for a freeze in Palestinian-Israeli autonomy talks to review the situation and called for democracy to be established in the self-rule areas.

The Declaration of Principles on autonomy, signed in September 1993, led to the launch of Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho last May.

Sha'th: Palestinian-Israeli Talks Remain on Hold

NC3001193095 Paris AFP in English 1807 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Jan 30 (AFP)—Chief Palestinian negotiator Nabil Sha'th said Monday [30 January] that Israel had fixed no date for the resumption of autonomy talks, postponed after a double suicide bombing which killed 21 Israelis in Netanya.

Sha'th told AFP that Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres was not able to give him a date for talks when the two men met at a World Economic Forum meeting in Davos in Switzerland.

Peres told him that "the Israeli government is in a difficult situation internally" after a Moslem militant attack on January 22, Sha'th said.

Israel sealed off the West Bank and autonomous Gaza Strip after the bombing, and postponed talks with the Palestinians on an army redeployment from the West Bank, already seven months behind schedule.

Peres himself was "surprised" by the Israeli government's decision Sunday to extend the closure of the territories for at least a second week, Sha'th said.

But the Israeli minister said the government would stick by its pledges to press ahead with the peace process.

"For my part, I assured him the Palestinian Authority was doing all it could security-wise, but the extension of the Israeli closure of Palestinian territories gives the Islamic opposition the chance to recruit people ready to commit suicide," Sha'th warned.

Peres is to visit Cairo on Wednesday for talks with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak on "obstacles hampering the Israeli-Arab peace process," officials said.

The Israeli minister's visit, his second this year, will come five days after Mubarak met with PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat.

Peres will also discuss Israeli-Egyptian relations with Mubarak and his Egyptian counterpart 'Amr Musa, officials added.

The two countries, which signed peace in 1979, have been locked in a dispute over Israel's refusal to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Meanwhile Sha'th said he had "fruitful meetings" with European leaders at the Davos gathering.

They pledged to speed up international aid to the Palestinian self-rule Authority and allow the export of tax-free Palestinian products to Europe, Sha'th said.

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Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Sends Message to Clinton on Peace, Ties

JN3001181995 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat today sent a reply message to U.S. President Bill Clinton. U.S. Consul General Mr. (Eddington), who was received by President 'Arafat in Gaza today, will convey the message to President Clinton. The message deals with the latest developments in the peace process and Palestinian-U.S. relations.

'Arafat: All Palestinians Fight for Same Cause

TA3001114395 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 30 Jan 95 p 1

[ITIM Report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] "We are all on our way to die as heroes on the road to Jerusalem, the capital of the state of Palestine," Yasir 'Arafat said in a speech in Gaza two week ago.

His words were captured on a videotape released by the Institute for Peace, a group that provides the Israeli population with various things said by Palestinian figures.

In the tape, 'Arafat is seen delivering his speech. The camera is always focused on his face, never on his audience. According to the institute, the tape was shown on Palestinian television.

'Arafat also said that the fallen of all the various Palestinian factions belong to the Palestinian revolution, including Hani 'Abid, the Islamic Jihad activist killed recently by a car bomb in Gaza.

He attached great importance to the prisoner issue, saying: "We will not leave even one prisoner in jail, and won't compromise on the release of the most senior among them—Shaykh Ahmad Yasin" of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement].

PA Condemns Israeli Raid on E. Jerusalem College

TA2901075695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Palestinian Authority [PA] has denounced the raid early Friday [27 January] morning on the Islamic College in Abu-Dis in East Jerusalem, saying it posed a serious threat to the entire peace process. The authority, at its weekly meeting in Gaza yesterday, condemned the arrest of 21 students—suspected Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad activists—and the damage to furniture and equipment by troops. The statement also condemns the raid as a violation of academic freedom and the agreement for early empowerment in the West Bank.

Students Protest Raid

TA3001121795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Dozens of Palestinian students and their supporters staged a demonstration this morning at the Islamic College at Abu-Dis in Eastern Jerusalem. They were protesting last week's raid by Israeli security services in which seditious material was seized and Islamic activists arrested. The demonstrators claimed that the Israeli security services acted against the college simply because it bore the name Jerusalem.

A demonstration was held at the al-Ram Junction into Jerusalem this morning by Palestinian journalists who live in the West Bank and are prevented by the closure from entering the capital. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Addresses Rally

JN3001173795 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A popular conference was held at noon today at the Science and Technology College in Abu Dis in solidarity with the students who were arrested in the Israeli raid on the university last Thursday. The occupation forces arrested 32 students and three teachers.

His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat delivered a speech over the phone, addressing the masses attending the conference. He strongly attacked the collective siege imposed on our people by Israel, settlement activities, and confiscation of lands. His excellency said: At this time and in this delicate stage through which we are passing, Israeli Prime Minister Rabin is trying to punish the Palestinian people—all our people in the West Bank and Gaza—and to impose a comprehensive siege on us. This siege is not confined only to our workers, but to all sectors of our people. This takes place at a time when the peace process should have been continuing, the detainees should have been released, and the occupation forces should have been redeployed so that the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] could spread its powers throughout the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory.

The president strongly criticized settlement activities and confiscation of lands by saying: They are trying, through this cancerous settlement policy, to devour our land, create new realities on it, and place us before new changes which they are trying to achieve on the ground. However, we say to everybody that this Palestinian people cannot kneel. We have ushered in the peace of brave, not the peace of submission. We have ushered in the peace, under which we will build our Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital, whether they like it or not.

Touching on the attempts to destroy the Palestinian dream, his excellency said: Our path is long and difficult. However, I have the right to say that those who are trying

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to obstruct the building of our state and prevent us from spreading our national authority to our occupied Palestinian territory aim at destroying the Palestinian dream.

Representing the PNA, Palestinian Economy Minister Ahmad Quray', also known as Abu-'Ala', delivered a speech at the popular conference in which he condemned the raid on the Science and Technology College at Abu Dis, expressing his surprise at this occupation onslaught on an education institution, which is under the supervision of the National Authority. He said: Never before have regular military units stormed a college of education in this brutal way as happened in Abu Dis.

Minister Quray' conveyed the greetings of President 'Arafat and the National Authority, as well as their solidarity with the University of Jerusalem and its students. He said that he who wants peace does not double settlements or confiscate land, noting that he who really seeks peace does not encroach on education institutions or attack their students. Concluding his speech, Abu-'Ala' called on Israel to spread an atmosphere of peace to give momentum to the talks to render them a success. [passage omitted]

PA's Quray' on 'Grave' Results of Israeli Policy

NC3101073795 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 31 Jan 95

[Phone interview with Ahmad Quray', Palestinian Authority's minister of economy and trade, in Gaza, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue from Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] Can you shed some light on the expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories?

[Quray'] We have already discussed this issue through the Voice of the Arabs, the voice of the Arab nation, and warned of the grave consequences of Israeli settlement activity and of expanding the settlements at this stage in which we are discussing reaching the second stage of implementing the Declaration of Principles and peace agreements. The settlement activity is undoubtedly a blow to this process. In the meeting between President Yasir 'Arafat and the Israeli prime minister, 'Arafat presented several views; they were not what was really wanted but they expressed, let me say, some satisfaction with the new Israeli policy. But the Israeli decision made two days ago on expanding the settlements in the areas surrounding the city of Jerusalem poses a grave danger and a lethal blow to the peace process if it is not stopped. For example, the Israelis decided to expand the settlements surrounding Jerusalem and to increase the number of houses so as to bring in new settlers. This is a very grave issue. The Palestinian National Authority [PA] council discussed this issue and released a statement warning of the grave consequences of this step.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] But, following President 'Arafat's recent meeting with Yitzhaq Rabin, there came an Israeli pledge that the government would not extend financial aid to build the settlements. But the odd thing is that the building of settlements and their expansion is going on. What is the significance of this action by the Israeli Government?

[Quray'] This is undoubtedly a grave issue. My worst fear is that the Israeli Government has officially given the green light for these activities. In contacts with them they said there is a halt to the settlements. But what is happening around Jerusalem—the settlements around Abu Dis, al-'Ayzariyah, Ma'ale Adunim, and in the areas of Bethlehem and Ramallah—poses a great danger. Building in these areas is continuing and roads are being opened around them. Rabin stressed to 'Arafat that there will be zoning [last word in English], that is, a metal fence will be erected around the areas surrounding the settlements. The fence will be no more than 50 meters from the buildings. This seemed like a reasonable thing to do until the negotiations on the final stage take place and the fate of the settlements is decided and they are uprooted.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Have you submitted a memorandum to the Security Council or the United Nations?

[Quray'] Yes. Efforts will continue to ask the Security Council to meet to discuss this issue, which will also be raised again before the Arab League and the Islamic Conference Organization.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Will this issue be discussed with the Israeli side soon?

[Quray'] Yes, this will happen. Some contacts have been made to warn of the grave consequences of this measure.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Following the establishment of the PA on Palestinian territory, what is being done now to stabilize the situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and to restore security to the self-rule areas?

[Quray'] More important is the implementation of the second part of the Declaration of Principles. At first this is bound to put an end to the settlement activity and expansion. Second, it is bound to make the Palestinian citizen feel that the peace process is proceeding according to the signed agreements. This will also pave the way for and encourage investment and economic action. But the stagnation of the situation, the closure of the occupied Palestinian territories, and, specifically, the closure of Jerusalem are like a fatal blow to every aspiration. We still hope that all these issues will be tackled. For example, if we look at the situation in Gaza, we see that it is not ideal, but when we compare it with what it was we find that there has been a slight improvement in the people's life. People have started to live a normal life and to feel there is security. The specter of the Israeli patrol raiding houses nightly and every morning has been removed. Such problems have started to disappear. But this also needs a flood of aid and a reduction in Israel's practices and measures. The people

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need to feel that the occupation is disappearing. Otherwise, things will be difficult.

['Abd al-'Aziz] We thank you very much.

[Quray'] Thank you.

PA Opens Comptroller's Offices in Gaza, Ramallah

TA3001092495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Yasir 'Arafat has decided to set up a comptroller's office to scrutinize the work of the Palestinian Authority [PA] in the autonomy area. The new branch started operating several days ago. Yoni Ben-Menahem reports:

[Begin Ben-Menahem recording] The comptroller general's office is headed by 'Abd-al-Karim al-'Aqluq, a senior Fatah member who headed its Revolutionary Council in the past. The Palestinians say that the comptroller general's office was tasked with missions similar to those of the Israeli state comptroller. The office is expected to oversee all the PA ministries, the municipal and rural councils, and the general associations.

The office has started operating in Gaza, and the head office in the West Bank, which opened in Ramallah several days ago, is being run by Ziyad Abu-'Ayn, a leading Fatah activist in the West Bank. We are fully willing to investigate and resolve any instance of corruption, he said. If corruption is found, we have the power to turn the investigation of the case over to the attorney general, who will take legal measures and mete out punishments, Abu-'Ayn promised.

The Palestinian comptroller's office does not have the authority to supervise the various Palestinian security apparatuses. It may receive complaints about them but must pass the complaints to 'Arafat, who will handle them personally. 'Arafat himself is also above the office's jurisdiction, and it may not oversee his activities. 'Arafat is the head of the PLO Executive Committee, Abu-'Ayn said, and the PLO has its own institutions for monitoring 'Arafat's activities.

He added that branches of the comptroller's office will soon be opened in West Bank cities, where the population will be able to file complaints. The first office opened in Ramallah, and it has received some 50 complaints so far. The offices in the West Bank will oversee the five areas of authority handed over to the Palestinians by the Israeli Civil Administration. [end recording]

New Political Movement Announced in Gaza

NC3101062795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2330 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza, 30 Jan (MENA)—The formation of a new Palestinian organization, the National Movement for Change [al- Harakah al-Wataniyah Li al-Taghyir], was announced in Gaza today.

A statement issued by the organization said it is a political democratic movement the aim of which is to form a popular bloc that will prevent any relinquishment or concessions regarding the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. The organization did not reject the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, because it has become a fact that cannot be ignored. But, the statement added, the agreement does not fulfill the Palestinian masses' legitimate aspirations.

The movement set its objectives as: Removing the Israeli settlements, not allowing the presence of Israeli forces in the self-rule area, and rejecting tying the Palestinian economy to the Israeli one.

The movement called on the Arab countries to reject normalization with Israel before reaching a final, comprehensive, and fair solution to the Falestinian issue, including the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to establishing its independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Jihad Seeks 'Military Coordination' With Hamas

MM2701164695 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 27 Jan 95 p3

[Report by Mahmud Abu-'Id: "Jihad Official Rejects Cessation of Operations Against Israel"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Occupied Jerusalem—Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Shami, leader of the Islamic Jihad in Palestine Movement in the Gaza Strip, has emphasized that his movement would not comply with any decision made by the Palestinian Authority [PA] on cessation of military operations against Israeli targets. Shaykh al-Shami's statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT was made the day before yesterday, just one hour before he was arrested by Palestinian police for the second time in one day.

Shaykh 'Abdallah said that he was informed of the PA's decision when he was summoned for interrogation the first time after the Bet Lid suicide operation in which 19 Israeli officers and soldiers and one civilian were killed.

He said that the Jihad Movement was, more than ever before, interested in raising the level of military coordination with Hamas in the next phase. He said: "So far there is no coordination but there is political and military cooperation. However, having both carried out a series of similar operations, our ambition is certainly to develop military coordination." Shaykh al-Shami revealed that the Israeli authorities have so far arrested over 400 of his movement's members since the Dezinkov street explosion in Tel Aviv. He added that "the Israeli authorities have failed to prove any charges against them and, therefore, transferred most of them to administrative detention."

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Explaining the Islamic Jihad Movement's view of the PA, al-Shami said: We do not view the PA as an enemy but we do not agree with its political views.

Answering the PA's charge that his movement, through such operations, was responsible for the delay of the release of Palestinian prisoners, he said: "The PA leaders should understand that the real responsibility for that operation falls on Israel."

Islamic Jihad Leader Justifies Use of Suicide Bombers

MS3001113695 London THE INDEPENDENT in English 30 Jan 95 p 11

[Report on interview with Islamic Jihad leader Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi by Robert Fisk in Damascus; date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus—Dr Fathi al-Shaqaqi is a man of supposedly infinite jest. He has been reading Hamlet again—for the fifth or sixth time, he insists, just before last week's suicide bombings in which two of his young Islamic Jihad members blew themselves to pieces along with 20 Israeli soldiers and a civilian. And he laughs as he talks.

He chuckles when he boasts of the Netanya bombings—"the biggest military attack ever inside Palestine," he says—and giggles when you ask if he knew in advance of the slaughter. Express your surprise that he neither greets visitors with "Salam Aleikum" nor quotes from the Koran, and he grins. "We are not talking about theology—we are talking about politics and military things."

For Dr al-Shaqaqi, Netanya was not murder most foul but a military "operation", of which he says there will be more in the coming weeks. "We will continue our struggle," he says. "A few years ago, we used knives. Three months ago, we used a bicycle bomb after Hani 'Abid (the Islamic Jihad journalist allegedly blown up by Israeli agents) was killed by Mosad. Now we have changed our style. We know the Israelis are very sophisticated too. It's more difficult and expensive for us to get explosives than for anyone else in the world, but if you want to, you can do it..." And he laughs again, insatiably, fearfully, such dark gibes, such sinister merriment.

Was he given advance warning of the suicide bombings at Netanya? "This is something I will not talk about." Another frightening smile. How did he respond to this bombing and to the slaughter of Israeli civilians in the Tel Aviv Hamas suicide bombings last October? Hamas should be asked for an explanation of the Tel Aviv bombing, Dr al-Shaqaqi replies. Netanya was a "military" target. Then the response turns to rapid fire.

"For us in Islamic Jihad, if we give orders to our mujahidin, we are talking about military and settlement targets. But in war many things can happen. We Palestinian people face an organised army and most of our losses are civilians... it is a war. We are not attacking Americans or Europeans. We are not even attacking Jews or Israelis outside Palestine. We are only defending our right to live in our homeland... We lived in peace with Jews for centuries. Why do the Jews want to live in a colonialist state? They can live in Europe or America... I have no problem with Jews... But I will fight occupation."

The room is banal; a third-storey office in the Palestinian camp at al-Yarmuk on the outskirts of Damascus, decorated by a model of Al-Aqsa mosque, a lithograph of Hani Abed and a framed photograph of two "martyrs" killed by the Israelis in southern Lebanon. Even his career sounds a trifle mundane at first hearing.

Born Gaza, 1951, his family originally from Rehovot, near Tel Aviv, in present-day Israel, a mathematics teacher Jerusalem in 1970-74, a medical student in Egypt until 1981, a doctor at Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem until 1983.

Dr al-Shaqaqi's English flowers and eclipses during conversation, along with his obsessive laughter and his desire to demonstrate his knowledge of English literature. "Before I am a politician and the leader of Islamic Jihad, I am a human being and a poet also—yes, I read your literature: Shakespeare, Dante, T S Eliot, Ezra Pound ..."

When I suddenly ask Dr al-Shaqaqi if he speaks Hebrew, there is a nervous shuffle from one of his underlings before another of those infuriating chuckles. "I learned Hebrew when I was in prison but it is very weak. How did you know I spoke Hebrew?" I tell Dr al- Shkaki that he pronounced "Rehovot" with an Israeli accent, that this gave him away. On the shelf beside in his desk there is also a Hebrew dictionary. He says he wants to improve his knowledge of the language—a strange ambition, it occurs to me, for a man who personally knew one of the suicide bombers who killed the 21 Israelis last Sunday.

"Yes, by chance I knew one of them Salah Shakir. When he was 14 years old he used to come to my home because I knew his big brothers—who were in the nucleus of our Islamic Jihad movement in Egypt. But I myself did not choose the bombers. This was the work of the military... the two mujahedin, Shakir and Anwar Sukkar, knew each other very well. Before it happened, they went to the scene of the operation and studied it carefully.

"At an exact hour and day, they went from Gaza to Tel Aviv, and from Tel Aviv to the military bus station, which was very well protected. No civilian can enter. But beside the military station there was a small coffee shop where some soldiers go to have coffee or eat. It's easy to enter the coffee shop but it's difficult to enter the station. They co-ordinated between them. The first was to enter the coffee shop and blow himself up. The second was to stay outside and wait for the soldiers, then enter the group and blow himself up."

There are no smiles now. "Before the intifadah (the Palestinian uprising), it was difficult to recruit for our

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military cells. But after the intifadah, many of the young wanted to do military operations. After the Oslo accords (between Israel and the PLO), this increased. Some of these youths who come to us insist they want to lead a suicide operation. Maybe it's because they are influenced by the teachings of Islamic Jihad. We choose only those who insist. My orders are to convince them not to go to test them. If they still insist, they are chosen."

It was in Egypt as a medical student that Dr al-Shaqaqi founded what was to become perhaps the fiercest of all Israel's modern-day enemies. "It started as a dialogue in the mid-1970s," he says. "I was a member for a few years of the (Egyptian) Muslim Brotherhood but I rejected their conceptions and moved to new ideas. As Palestinian students, we would discuss Islam and Palestine and we saw two categories of Palestinian: the nationalists, who talked about liberating Palestine but who forgot about Islam, and the traditionalists, who talked about Islam and an Islamic state but who forgot about Palestine. We had to solve this problematic issue, to make the crossing-point between nationalist and Islamist. So we talked about Islam, Palestine and Jihad (holy struggle) Islam would be the idea we would start with, Palestine the goal to liberate and Jihad would be the way, the method."

Around 50 Palestinians grouped themselves around Dr al-Shaqaqi in Egypt and formed the organisation of Islamic Jihad on their return. Dr al-Shaqaqi was leader even as he worked as a doctor in Jerusalem. He married—the family has two boys and a girl—and published a magazine, Islamic Vanguard, which cost him a year in Gaza jail.

In 1986 he was arrested again and sentenced to four years in prisons at Ashkelon and at Nafah in the Negev desert. After serving scarcely two years of his sentence, he was deported to Lebanon—apparently on the personal orders of Yitzhak Rabin—and made his way to Damascus but only after visiting Tehran. where he met Ayatollah Khomeyni six months before the spiritual leader died. He has returned to Tehran four or five times since—once for a conference at which the Iranians pledged millions of dollars for the Palestinian "resistance"

As for Damascus, Dr al-Shaqaqi insists that he receives no "material support" from Syria. After the Netanya bombing, the US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher telephoned Faruq al-Shar', the Syrian Foreign Minister, to ask Syria to give "no further sanctuary to terrorists".

Dr al-Shaqaqi says he is untroubled by Mr Christopher's demand. "Damascus is a capital open to all Arabs. I came as an Arab citizen. Our presence here is not an official one like other (Palestinian) factions. We don't have official relations with the Syrian government... after Christopher phoned to Dr al-Sharaa, the Syrians haven't talked to me and I haven't talked to them. We don't have institutions or infrastructure here. It is very easy for me to move to another capital if that is in Syria's interests."

Islamic Jihad Figure Discusses Israeli Measures

NC3001204795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 30 Jan 95

[Telephone interview with Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Awdah, "one of the most prominent figures of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad Movement," by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] The Zionist government has decided to suspend the so-called peace talks with the Palestinian self-rule Authority. We note that such a measure is taken after every jihad operation. This means that the Oslo accord has set a mission for Yasir 'Arafat. In your opinion, what is this mission?

['Awdah] In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. It is very clear that the so-called Oslo accord or peace project contains no solution to the Palestinian people's problem or suffering. Therefore, we believe this accord carries the seeds of its own collapse. In the view of the masses of our Palestinian people and in the view of the Arab and Islamic peoples, this accord does not exist. Israel's procrastination is clear. It is as if this accord is intended to shackle these masses and impose more repression on them.

[Correspondent] It seems that the separation that Yitzhaq Rabin wants has become clear. It means surrounding Palestinian villages and towns with large numbers of policemen and police dogs. Do you have anything to add on this subject? Will the Palestinian people adjust to these measures, just as they have adjusted to the demolition of houses, destructive bombs, and death squads?

['Awdah] It is very clear that the Israeli Government is frustrated. The Israeli Government wants everything without offering anything. It wants peace, settlements, and a continuation of the occupation. It is frustrated and has no clear stance because it is hiding its real aims. I believe that all these measures—separation and more blockades of the Palestinian people—will lead to more suffering and harassment in the short run but will not weaken their determination, because the people's struggle has its own rules and laws which such methods and measures, which have been tried in the past, have no chance of defeating. The Israeli government is thinking of everything except one thing, namely withdrawal and giving the people their freedom and self- determination.

[Correspondent] For the first time, Zionist Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has admitted that the jihad operations pose a danger for Israel's security. Is he hiding wicked intentions behind this admission or is it an expression of his fear of the Palestinian people's struggle?

['Awdah] All these things are possible. Such operations deep inside Israel confuse that entity and worry it. Perhaps they also want to create a furor about this alleged security they are always speaking about to justify

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their wicked intentions. On the one hand, these operations have them worried on the security level; on the other hand, perhaps they intend further revenge against the Palestinian people and they want an excuse to do so.

[Correspondent] While Zionist enemy has taken all these measures, the United Nations has remained silent. Meanwhile, the United Nations has hastened to condemn the Netanya operation. How do you explain this silence?

['Awdah] It is very clear that the world has many measurements and yardsticks. It has double standards. The Palestinian people, the Lebanese people, and other Islamic peoples are being subjected to a lot of abuse and aggression, but no voices of condemnation are heard. This is an example of double standards. This is proof of the hegemony of the arrogant forces over the United Nations.

Hizballah, PFLP-GC Leaders Mock Clinton's Actions

NC2501182395 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 25 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Former Hizballah Secretary General Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli and Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], affirmed today that freezing the assets of their two organizations which was announced by U.S. President Bill Clinton will not prevent them from continuing their operations against Israel. Al-Tufayli said that the U.S. Administration's war against anyone who might make a modest financial contribution to those working to recover Palestine means that the real and major enemy occupying Palestine is not the Jews but the Americans. The Jews are no more than a spearhead for the real occupier. On his part, Jibril said that we forgive them for everything they are exporting to us. We have never tried to save money because we are mujahidin who depend on jihad. We are not mercenaries.

Shaykh Na'im Qasim, Hizballah deputy secretary general, also denied that the party or any of its members have assets in the United States. He described President Clinton's decision as a joke which he wants to use to raise the morale of the usurping enemy. He also wants to show the world that he can exert pressure on Hizballah, according to what Shaykh Na'im Qasim said.

Yesterday, President Clinton decided to freeze the assets of 12 terrorist organizations in the United States because of suspicions that they want to destroy the Middle East peace process. The U.S. measure included 12 people, among whom are al-Tufayli and Jibril.

'Abbas Urges Larger Russian Role in Peace Process

MM3001160095 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 28 Jan 95 p5

[Unattributed report: "Abu-Mazin Urges Reactivation of Russian Role"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—PLO Executive Committee Member Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin) has called for a more effective Russian role in the Middle East peace process. In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, he said that it is not in the interest of the Arabs to minimize that role or try to cancel it.

Abu-Mazin made the statement after his visit to Russia last week during which he held talks with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk on the latest developments in the Middle East peace process.

Abu-Mazin, who chaired the meetings of the Palestinian-Russian Coordination Committee in Moscow, said that the Palestinians wanted Russia to play a more effective part in reactivating the deadlocked peace process and in eliminating the obstacles in the way of that process.

He added: The Russian role is necessary alongside the U.S. role to push the peace process forward and extricate it from the problem of Israeli intransigence.

Referring to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's recent statements on complete separation of Palestinians and Israelis, Abu-Mazin said: "In actual fact, that plan seems to be specifying the features of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian state." But he added that he did not know if Rabin's aim is to achieve that or to isolate Palestinian territory.

He added: "But I believe that the remedy to the current acts of violence lies in progress in the peace process and in the removal of the obstacles standing in its way."

He stressed that Israel bears a major responsibility for the current stumbling and slow-moving peace process.

'Urayqat Criticizes Rabin's Statements on Elections

JN2801171295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government of the Palestinian National Authority, has criticized Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's statements ruling out any legislative elections in the near future. 'Urayqat said that during his recent meeting with His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat at Erez checkpoint, Yitzhaq Rabin asserted that Israel would not place any obstacles before the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from the occupied West Bank and holding the Palestinian legislative elections.

Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat added that the contradictory statements of the Israeli prime minister, particularly those pertaining to the settlements issue, will empty the peace process of its real meanings.

The Israeli military radio yesterday disclosed the statements made by Yitzhaq Rabin during his meeting with the leaders of the Likud bloc. He said that the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from the occupied West Bank and holding the Palestinian legislative elections will require lengthy negotiations with the PLO.

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Urges Quicker Accord Implementation

TA2901142995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Palestinian Authority [PA] is concerned about the Rabin government's drop in popularity. Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat said today that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin must not delay the implementation of the Oslo agreement until after the elections. Dani Zaqen spoke with Sa'ib 'Urayqat.

[Begin recording] [Zaqen] The PA is anxiously following the government's standing in Israeli public opinion polls and the results of recent surveys have Palestinian leaders worried. Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, who is in charge of municipal affairs in the autonomy, has urged Rabin to expedite the process and implement all the agreements, including handing over Judaea and Samaria to the PA.

['Urayqat, in English] I hope that Mr. Rabin will continue his commitment to the implementation of the second stage of the agreement and not to delay it till after the Israeli elections.

[Zaqen translates above remarks into Hebrew and continues] 'Urayqat stressed that the Oslo and Cairo agreements constituted the only solution to the conflict. Today in Jericho, Dr. 'Urayqat hosted dozens of Arab mayors and local council chairmans from the territories who were attending a seminar on drafting a basic municipal law for the territories. The draft proposal, 'Urayqat said, will soon be submitted to the PA and the work of solving the resident's daily problems may begin. 'Urayqat asserted that the PA's major difficulty was the huge scope of problems demanding solutions and the fact that what has already been done does not seem like enough.

['Urayqat, in English] We have a problem as a Palestinian Authority. We have a huge mountain of things to be done. So, irrespective of how much things you do from this mountain, and you take it outside that mountain and put it next to it, to the common eye, to the Palestinian eye, they look at what needs to be done and not what was done and that is a problem for us. [passage omitted] [end recording]

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Algeria

President Zeroual To Invite Observers to Election

LD3001181495 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Liamine Zeroual, the state president, announced that the state of Algeria will ask international organizations to send representatives to follow up on the progress of this year's presidential elections. This measure falls within the framework of the policy of breaking with the practices of the past, the state president said in a speech he delivered this afternoon to citizens and officials of Sidi Bel Abbes Province.

President Zeroual invited the citizens to express their worries, and to talk frankly with him. He pointed out that Algeria is gradually promoting all spheres, thereby proving that it has inaugurated the reform initiative. It remains incumbent on the Algerian people and their state to work together to prevent this reform from [committing] the errors of the past, the errors of easy solutions and deviations, Zeroual said. [passage omitted]

Zeroual Foresees Free, Democratic Elections

LD3001225295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1853 GMT 30 Jan 95

[Speech by President Liamine Zeroual to citizens and officials in Sidi Bel Abbes on 30 January—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate: Dear citizens, thank you for your frank interventions, for this is the language which I had desired to hear from you and which should prevail among the people and the state. The state which is the citizen's and at his service. I am satisfied at the message of hope which you have expressed through the local problems and the legitimate preoccupations which you have highlighted. [passage omitted]

I am very much satisfied to know that there is still hope and there is still determination at the time when some sources are trying to give a distorted picture and plant disappointment in the souls of the citizens. You all know, and this is something no one can deny, that this hope and this determination are present among our people and this is because of well known reasons. [passage omitted]

The changes which are coming in the future are going to be made, to a large extent, within the framework of national dialogue. Because it is impossible for anybody to replace the main concerned parties and the Algerian people itself. This was the premise on which we decided to create the Economic and Social National Council, the Supreme Youth Council, the Supreme Council for Education, the National Council for the Promotion of the Tamazighth [Berber language], and other councils which are going to be created, God willing, to complete the structures of the democratic state which we are all aspiring for—the state of law and the state of all Algerians which is at the service of the people only. [passage omitted]

God willing, we are going to restore civil peace and stability and maintain them along with a genuine revival of development. We will, God willing, respond to the legitimate aspirations of our people and especially the aspirations of our youth. This work requires patience and we have to undertake it, for any delay in this respect will cost us a lot. It has become imperative today on the state's organs, the intellectuals and the national information media to explain to the Algerian people the stakes and the facts understood by those who decided to revolt against the Algerian people, those who are demanding to bring pressure to bear on Algeria. Our people is going to be their first victim. This is the aim of the criminals who want to practice the scorched earth policy. [passage omitted]

I said earlier that the sanctity of Islam, under which those criminals seek to cover themselves, has been violated. Today I would like to put the following question to everybody: In the name of which political project and in the name of what ideology are these crimes and destructive operations being committed? This question does not of course concern loyal patriots who have already taken their stand in this respect, but it concerns the few who are still full of doubt inside or outside Algeria. The whole of humanity has never committed barbaric acts such as those being faced by Algeria today. Even our guests of various nationalities [were targeted].

The whole people is targeted in its honor, its dignity, its property, and even in its life. This people will resist and will triumph as the conspiracies, the moves, and the bets are increasingly exposed every day. The state, for its part, will shoulder its full responsibilites to eradicate the roots of violence in our country. [passage omitted]

As you know, we made legal arrangements for clemency involving those persons who might recant before it is too late. The state intends to use all means to put a limit, inside the law, to crimes and destruction. This is the duty of the state toward the people who have daily been paying an enormous price—this people who will not surrender and who still say that they reject terrorism quite clearly and quite strongly.

Algeria is a state of law and order. Authority will always rest with the law in the shadow of respecting the law itself. As I previously said and underlined in front of the judges, it is not possible fo us to realize democracy or development or progress while violence and destruction are demolishing our country's stability.

More often than not these people claim to advocate democracy and represent the people's will solely to justify the crimes and the destruction facing our people. Democracy and freedom of choice, however, are the Algerian people's choice and it is impossible to retreat from that. It will be so in the transitional period through

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which the country will be passing, in order to allow the final consolidation of the pluralist democracy. We have chosen dialogue as the best method to arrive at this objective in the shadow of reuniting the people and achieving national reconciliation. This objective requires that differences must be put behind us for the sake of serving national reconciliation and at the same time it requires deep conviction. The state does have this conviction. It doubled its efforts to develop dialogue even among the parties themselves. This dialogue took place in complete transparency as you know.

This choice will remain for ever. Previously I said a number of times that the dialogue will be in Algeria and only among Algerians. However, in the face of what we have seen, it has been necessary to speed up the direct return to the people—the possessor of sovereignty and the source of legitimacy.

The Algerian people will be making their choice before the end of this year, God willing, by means of free democratic elections in the strict meaning of sovereignty. The state is determined to provide the necessary conditions for that. Moreover, as I have previously announced, we have started in recent days to discuss all the conditions connected with these elections. The matter here concerns a sincere invitation for consultation to bring the points of view closer over a known framework, bases and constants which embody the choices of the nation. This dialogue will also be conducted in complete transparency, and these elections will also take place in complete transparency.

We take this opportunity to announce before the Algerian people today that the state will ask the international organizations to send observers to monitor and see for themselves the progress and impartiality of the presidential elections. This decision falls within the framework of the policy of breaking with the practices of the past. This is my pledge before God and the Algerian people. [passage omitted]

From now on, this rupture with the past should guarantee that the assumption of power will only take place through the Algerian people's true choice—the free Algerian people alone.

Thanks to these elections, the Algerian people will be able to achieve and consecrate its togetherness through expressing its will. This togetherness is not consensus, but a togetherness of the Algerian males and females in the shadow of a pluralistic democracy, chosen finally by them, which will contribute toward uprooting the last seeds of disunity and division. [passage omitted]

Government Asks Libya To Clarify al-Fazzani Comment

LD3001175195 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Today the Foreign Ministry summoned 'Ashur Muhammad Gargum [name as heard], secretary of the Libyan Arab Brotherhood Bureau. Mr. Gargum was received by Foreign Minister Mr. Mohamed Salah Dembri who asked him for clarifications over the statements made to AFP in Tunis by Jum'ah Mahdi al-Fazzani, secretary of the General People's Committee for Unity.

Reportage on Car Bomb Blast in Central Algiers

French Press Overview

NC3001174995 Paris AFP in English 1526 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Algiers, Jan 30 (AFP)—A car-bomb exploded on Monday [30 January] near the central city police station in the Algerian capital killing at least four people and injuring several others.

The powerful blast at 3.20 p.m. (1420 GMT) shook nearby buildings and shattered windows, an AFP correspondent said.

The car was completely destroyed in the explosion, which left a crater in the road two metres (six feet) wide and more than 50 centimetres (18 inches) deep. Thick smoke poured from other vehicles which caught fire.

The bombing was the latest act of violence in a three-year conflict between Islamic radicals and the government which is estimated to have cost 20,000 lives.

On Sunday opposition parties which had signed an accord with fundamentalist groups aimed at bringing peace to the country said they had been refused a meeting with Algerian President Liamine Zeroual.

Security forces immediately cordoned off the area and sporadic automatic weapons fire could also be heard.

Several people, their faces covered in blood from injuries from flying glass, ran from the scene. Some abandoned their cars and others were sitting on the ground, trying to recover themselves.

An employee of a bank close to the scene confirmed that a car bomb was the cause of the explosion, but added that he did not know whether the vehicle was stationary or moving at the moment of the blast.

Algeria has been wracked by violence since the cancellation of the second round of a general election the radical Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win in January 1992.

The FIS was subsequently outlawed.

On January 13, delegates of the FIS and the secular opposition issued what they described as a "national contract", calling for an end to the violence and emergency measures, negotiations with the army-backed regime and the release of all political prisoners, but the government has rejected the call.

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The Algerian interior ministry earlier Monday announced the curtailing by half an hour of a curfew in force in 10 central districts since December 1992, for the holy fasting month of Ramadan.

The curfew will now take effect from midnight until 4:00 a.m., instead of beginning at 11:30 p.m.

Ramadan is due to begin on Tuesday or Wednesday. Last year, the curfew was also cut by half an hour to allow people to say the lengthy prayers of Ramadan and make night-time family visits in the holy month, when eating is not permitted in daylight hours.

On Friday, the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), considered to be the armed wing of the FIS, called on its fighters to intensify their activities during the holy month, as has happened in the past.

[Paris AFP in English at 1528 GMT on 30 Jan adds the following:

["Twenty people were killed and 60 wounded in a booby-trapped car explosion in the centre of the Algerian capital on Monday, security services said."]

Further Details Reported

LD3001184195 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 30 Jan 95

[Interview with Noureddine Kasdalli, minister delegate to the interior minister for local authorities and administrative reform, by unidentified correspondent, at scene of bomb explosion in Algiers on 30 January—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Kasdalli] Thus far there are 35 dead and 254 injured. Some of the latter have already returned home and are now fine, and about 100 persons are still here. Some of the victims are members of the security forces, but most of the victims are from the people, particularly children.

[Correspondent] Have you an idea about the quantity of TNT used in the car.

[Kasdalli] From what I heard—I have not yet contacted the security forces—there was about 100 kg of TNT. Nothing was left, we cannot say whether it was a bus or a truck, or a car or two cars. We do not know yet. The matter is being investigated to find evidence on what happened. [video shows a number of blood-stained and mutilated bodies of victims of car bomb explosion, Kasdalli talking]

[Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic at 1900 GMT on 30 January adds: "The latest count of casualties caused by this barbaric explosion has reached 38 people killed and 256 people injured, of whom 55 are critical cases."]

Madani's Son Acquitted of Forming Armed Group

LD3001220495 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [jailed Islamic Salvation Front leader] Abassi Madani's son, Okba Abassi, was acquitted today by Algiers special court. He had been charged for setting up an armed group.

Progress Achieved in Talks With World Bank, IMF

LD3001202795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Encouraging progress has been achieved in Algeria's talks with the international financial institutions, particularly with the International Monetary Fund [IMF] and the World Bank, in the sphere of restructuring and extended economic facilities. [passage omitted]

Algeria was holding talks with the Bank on financing development projects, and was also holding talks with the IMF to sign a new stand-by agreement.

According to a statement by Finance Minister Ahmed Benbitour to APS on the sidelines of the meeting of the Arab Maghreb Union's ministers, these talks were proceeding in a sound manner.

Mr. Benbitour pointed out that the Stand-By II talks were connected with restructuring, and that the period of the agreement would be one year after signing it next March. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Mufti Urges 'Jihad' Against 'Zionist Enemy'

NC3001121095 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 24 Jan 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Mufti of the Republic Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi called for preparations for jihad against the Zionist enemy and for punishing those who want to commit aggression against us.

In an exclusive statement to AL-SHA'B, the mufti said: Israel's threats to punish Egypt are, as Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said, to be thrown in the rubbish bin; they are of no value. We must be prepared and be at peace with those who want to be at peace with us and punish those who want to commit aggression against us.

On newspaper reports that there is a document confirming that Israel will declare war on Egypt in 1997 and on whether it is the Muslims' duty to prepare for jihad now, his eminence the mufti said: (Of course it is the Muslims' duty to prepare to defend their possessions, themselves, religion, and homeland. There is no doubt about this.)

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Asked for his view of peace (al-sulh) with Israel amid the current conditions, Dr. Tantawi said: (I do not see peace with someone who wants to harm us. Peace is only made with someone who does not do me harm.)

Minister: U.S. Freezing of Assets 'Positive'

NC3001150495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1414 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 30 Jan (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has announced that security forces will continue their deterrent measures against terrorism in Upper Egypt. Noting that state security personnel recently succeeded in eliminating leading terrorists, he declared that a lot of credit goes to the citizens who were very cooperative with the police.

In remarks today at the Police Sports Federation, while inaugurating some administrative and sports facilities, al-Alfi stressed the positive role played by the citizens in Qina recently when they succeeded in seizing alive Hasan Husayn, one of the most dangerous terrorists in the area, and handing him over to the state security detectives.

Asked to comment on the recent U.S. decision to freeze the assets of terrorist organizations and the effect that this might have on the financing of terrorist operations inside Egypt, al-Alfi said this decision is positive and will have positive results, particularly as it has been proven that the financing of terrorist groups inside Egypt comes from abroad.

Al-Alfi noted that the U.S. decision will have a beneficial effect not only on Egypt but on most of the other Arab countries as well, keeping in mind that the terrorists have designs on all Arab countries.

Musa: Damascus Declaration Ministers To Meet 5 Feb

NC3001180695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1700 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 30 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has announced that the foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration countries will meet in Cairo next Sunday [5 February] to discuss several papers submitted by Egypt and other members. He noted that the meeting is important.

Musa, who was speaking after his return from Davos, Switzerland where he chaired the Egyptian delegation to an international economic meeting, said that the discussions of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers will focus on relations between the Declaration signatories and regional security in the context of disarmament.

He added that Egyptian foreign policy focuses on invigorating the peace process, preventing its failure, and promoting collective Arab action.

Concerning his meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, 'Amr Musa said that several points are under discussion, notably the need to salvage the peace process and implement Palestinian-Israeli agreements. He said that contacts are continuing in this regard.

Mubarak Phones Husayn, Rabin, 'Arafat on Peace

NC3001204495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1930 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 30 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak today held a series of telephone contacts, during which he conducted consultations and exchanged views concerning the Middle East peace process.

The president telephoned King Husayn of Jordan and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. He also contacted Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat.

Libya's Yunus Meets Mubarak, Ends Visit to Egypt

NC3001204895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1947 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 30 Jan (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received today Colonel Abu-Bakr Yunus, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for Defense [title as received]. Col. Yunus arrived in Cairo yesterday and left again tonight.

PLO's Qaddumi Arrives, Speaks on Israel 'Obstacles'

NC2601170495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1630 GMT 26 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (MENA)—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO's political department, arrived in Cairo from Addis Ababa this afternoon on a lightning working visit to Cairo lasting several hours, during which he will meet with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

He stated on arrival that he will discuss with Musa the latest Middle East developments and the obstacles placed by Israel to impede the peace process. He said that he attended the meetings of the OAU foreign ministers while he was in Addis Ababa. He added that the ministers approved the resolutions on the Palestinian issue. After noting that the African countries are backing and supporting his country's cause, he said that he briefed the African foreign ministers on recent developments, particularly Israel's lack of desire to establish a just peace, as evidenced by its practices inside the occupied territories, its refusal to recognize the [Palestinians'] national rights, and its non-implementation of its commitments and pledges.

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Regarding the Israeli Government's decision to build 3,000 housing units for Jewish settlers, Qaddumi said that this confirms Israel's intransigence and its lack of desire for peace. He added: Through its practices, Israel is confirming that it rejects peace and refuses to comply with what it has signed, thus creating tension in the region.

President Mubarak Discusses Peace Process

NC3101093195 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 31 Jan 95

[Interview with President Husni Mubarak by unidentified correspondents on 31 January; place not given; on the "Good Morning Egypt" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] Following your meeting with university students, we got the impression that some of them were worried by some statements on the peace process. What is your comment?

[Mubarak] I said at the meeting that the peace was made by Egypt, no one else. It was Egypt that began the peace process. President al-Sadat took the first courageous step and the Arab countries were forced under pressure to freeze their relations with Egypt. Now everyone is saying that al-Sadat has gone down in history and was right. The Camp David Accord stipulated the Israeli forces' withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza to positions outside the borders of these two areas, positions that would be agreed on in the negotiations. There were no more than 48 settlements then and now there are 180 settlements. It was Egypt that created peace; it will not deviate from the peace course. Egypt will continue to back the peace process until we achieve comprehensive peace in the region. The peace process might be stalling now because of forces that are pushing some terrorists to thwart the process with events such as the explosion in Netanya. I hope this will not be a reason for stopping the peace process. We must proceed with the peace process and make progress despite the difficulties, because the forces opposed to peace would win the battle if we halted the process. We must continue, and Israel and the countries adjoining it must work toward peace despite the difficulties and obstacles that might arise. The Netanya operation should be an incentive, making Israel and the neighboring countries insist on continuing the peace process.

[Correspondent] You made intensive and continuous efforts in the past few days to clear the Arab air and restore the Arab ranks. You often mentioned that this issue needs much work and time. What is the most important result reached so far?

[Mubarak] Look, we hope conciliation will return to the whole Arab world as soon as possible. It is a matter of time but there is great hope that the air will be cleared. I went to Jordan and also met our brothers in Saudi Arabia and Yemen. We discussed the problem between Saudi Arabia and Yemen and many other problems that need efforts to solve them. There is great hope that most of the problems will be solved. I hope our Arab brothers will not heed the slander coming from countries that only want to deepen the rift. We must be pragmatists and talk reasonably so as to solve our problems. The clearer the Arab atmosphere the stronger the Arab nation.

[Correspondent] We are interested in Your Excellency's view of the importance of this meeting.

[Mubarak] I talked to them about the facts and explained the issues very honestly while considering the aspects that might harm our policy course. I gave them the real facts and corrected their concepts about democratic life and also their views, even of minor issues. Some may have a simple question, but we can clarify the information they have. We explained things to them frankly so that they could get an idea about the way in which the country is proceeding and about the country's national policy on domestic and foreign issues. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. President, it is very clear that you are interested in the youth, their problems, and their education. We feel that the youth are worried about terrorism. How can we remove this feeling with our education, university libraries, and culture?

[Mubarak] Terrorism is not an Egyptian phenomenon, but an international one. It is found in Australia, the United States, Argentina, South America, England, and France. This phenomenon exists everywhere. Terrorism is a characteristic of this age. We are resisting terrorism. As for those who tell us to have a dialogue with the terrorists, well, we held a dialogue with them starting in 1979 but it was stopped when they started to use weapons. That was caused by foreign forces that are teaching people wrong and destructive ideas. I hope our sons in Upper Egypt realize that this is not in their interests or those of their country. Have you seen those who have been orphaned, even among the police? More civilians have been killed than terrorists. It has become an issue of life and death. I hope it will end for the sake of protecting our lives and the lives of our sons and for the sake of development so that we can encourage investment, create jobs, and produce.

'Terrorist' Shot in Court in Attempt To Seize Gun

NC3001170795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1631 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 30 Jan (MENA)—An Interior Ministry security source has stated the following: While a Manfalut court was discussing the adjournment of a court session today, the defendant, Fadi 'Abd-al-Hakim Mahmud Salamah, tried to seize a guard's automatic rifle, with which he meant to assault the police detail guarding him. One of the guards, a member of the Manfalut Pursuit Unit, shot and killed him before he had a chance to use the rifle.

An Interior Ministry statement said that the defendant was on trial in connection with Case 3590/94 regarding

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his firing on a police vehicle in Manfalut on 23 November 1994. A police warrant officer died in that incident.

Mauritania

Authorities Ease Curfew in Capital City

AB2901162095 Paris AFP in English 1612 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nouakchott, Jan 29 (AFP)—Authorities Sunday [29 January] eased a curfew imposed in the Mauritanian capital a week ago after street riots over a 25-percent rise in the price of bread, officials said. The curfew, in force since January 22, was trimmed by two hours to run from 10 P.M. to 6 A.M.

The large number of police stationed in the capital since the unrest also appeared to have been significantly reduced along main roads and in poor districts.

Prime Minister Sidi Mohamed Ould Boubacar said Saturday that eight opposition leaders would remain under house arrest but he hoped "the situation will return to normal before the start of Ramadan."

Ramadan, the Moslem month of fasting, begins this year on Tuesday or Wednesday. Islamic leaders in each country decide the date the night before, based on when they have sighted the moon.

The government accused the opposition of organizing the violent demonstrations of January 22 and 23, and detained several of its leaders. However the opposition said the riots by hundreds of young people from poor districts were spontaneous.

Prime Minister Boubacar Defends Recent Arrests

LD2801154595 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The situation is still very tense in Mauritania after last weekend's demonstrations against the price increases of staple commodities, particularly that of bread. There is no news yet of the five people arrested after these demonstrations, among them the two leaders of the two main opposition parties. Our special correspondent in Nouakchott, Muriel Pomponne, met with Mauritanian Prime Minister Sidi Mohamed Ould Boubacar and asked him to give details about those arrested:

[Begin recording] [Boubacar] Those arrested some days ago are under house arrest in the country due to the serious incidents which have been taking place in Nouakchott since last Saturday. From the outset these incidents were organized. Unfortunately, some opposition members have already called for an uprising in official communiques. They called on people to march into the streets to overthrow the legal institutions.

[Pomponne] Why were these people arrested?

[Boubacar] These people were put under house arrest to prevent continued calls to violence being made and to put an end to the organization being set up in order to provoke serious civil disobedience.

[Pomponne] Will they be tried?

[Boubacar] They will be free to move as soon as the security situation allows. [end recording]

Foreign Minister Lekhel on Nouakchott Riots

LD2801210995 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] For Mauritanian Foreign Minister Mohamed Salem Ould Lekhel, who has been in Algiers since today, riots in Nouakchott are not innocent.

[Begin Lekhel recording, in Arabic with superimposed French translation] The increase in the price of bread was one motive. The aim was the destruction of private and public property. [end recording]

For the Mauritanian foreign minister, the situation is under control, those behind it all have been arrested and they will be prosecuted.

Germany Signs Financial Cooperation Agreement

LD2901214995 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 1900 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Planning Minister Taki Ould Sidi and Johannes Westerhoff, the German ambassador to our country, today signed a financial cooperation agreement between the Mauritanian and German Governments worth 1.501 billion ouguia. The said sum will be earmarked for funding development projects basically in the sphere of agriculture and consolidating the state's efforts in the field of construction, cleansing, insurance, etc. On this occasion the minister expressed the Mauritanian Government thanks for this important support, and pointed out that bilateral cooperation is good and Germany's contribution is vital as far as the development effort in the country is concerned. On his part the German diplomat expressed his pleasure on this occasion and lauded the standard of bilateral cooperation and its diversification.

Tunisia

Imprisoned Islamic Leader Dies of Hemorrhage

LD3001220395 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Tunisia, Sahnoun al-Jawhari, one of the leaders of the Tunisian Islamic movement, Ennahdah, has died in prison.

He had been in prison for three years. He was suffering from a serious illness, which was not diagnosed in time,

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and he was taken to hospital too late. He died there of an hemorrhage on 26 January. This is what he heard today.

Parties To Participate in Municipal Elections

Renewal Movement To Take Part

LD2901210095 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The constituent assembly of the Renewal Movement [former communists] met on 28-29 January under the chairmanship of Mohamed Ali Halouani, chairman of the assembly.

Following discussions, the assembly issued a statement which said in particular: After listening to a report presented by Mohamed Harmel, secretary general of the movement, on the political situation in the country, and the forthcoming municipal elections, the assembly has decided that the movement will take part in these elections.

The assembly stressed the movement's readiness to hold a dialogue with all the democratic national forces.

Socialist Democrats To Take Part

LD3001232895 Tunis Tunis-7 Television in Arabic 1900 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The national council of the Movement of Socialist Democrats held a special session on the forthcoming municipal elections under the chairmanship of the leader of the movement Mr. Mohamed Moaada.

A statement that was issued on this session said the national council confirmed the movement's decision to take part in the forthcoming municipal elections, praised the experiment of the pluralistic parliament, its consolidation of the democratic charter, and the interest of His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in strengthening these gains to make the forthcoming municipal elections successful in this direction.

The statement also said the national council called on the national sides to work to make this important national occasion successful.

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Saudi-Yemeni Talks Enter 'Decisive Stage'

MM3001141495 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 30 Jan 95 pp1, 4

[Reports by Hasin al-Bunyan in Riyadh, Salwa al-Ustuwani in Damascus, and AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau in Cairo: "Saudi-Yemeni Negotiations Enter Decisive Phase; Meeting Between Prince Sultan and al-Ahmar To Bridge Positions Where There Are Differences of Opinion"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Informed sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Saudi-Yemeni negotiations to end border disputes and restore normal relations between the two countries have entered a decisive stage. They said that there are many points of similarity and agreement between the two negotiating delegations and that the positions are not far apart.

The sources said that the negotiations have entered a decisive phase and that the aim is to crystallize the ideas and concepts of both sides into a final draft agreement on settlement of all border problems, to be submitted to the summit meeting expected to be held between Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih for approval.

The sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the differences of views and positions between the two negotiating teams were on "procedural matters" only. In order to resolve the differences, a meeting was held yesterday between the heads of the two delegations—Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, Saudi second deputy prime minister, defense and aviation minister, and inspector general, and Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives. The meeting was attended by Ibrahim al-'Anqari, special adviser to the custodian of the two holy mosques, and 'Abd-al-Qadir Ba-Jammal, Yemeni deputy prime minister and planning minister.

The sources said that, at their meeting, the two chief delegates "discussed ways of bridging the views with the aim of making tangible progress in the negotiating process."

They added that the meeting was "useful and positive" and that it would have positive effects on the atmosphere of the sixth round of negotiations which was resumed yesterday evening at the palace of conferences and which covered consultation on the drafting of the joint paper on which the final draft agreement between the two countries would be based.

The sources said: We are now in the phase of maturation of the proposed and exchanged ideas, and of peripheral consultations on the interpretation and clarification of the commitments of both negotiating sides to safeguard the interests and rights of the two sides, which will be included in the final joint paper or document.

The sources added that it is still too early to speak of the final phase of drafting the joint document, but that this current phase is one of reconciling proposed ideas which differ from time to time, but both sides understand that more direct dialogue, discussions, and meetings will achieve more rapprochement. They emphasized that there is no disagreement between the two sides on border integrity and the unity of the al-Ta'if agreement as an integral whole.

The sources said that the two negotiating teams are in agreement in principle on border integrity and indivisibility, but with some technical differences, and that they are in agreement on two main principles: arrangement of steps and uniformity of their approach in tackling the border issue. They also said that the current negotiations cover all borders as one integral unit and that there will be no negotiations on specific points regarding al-Maharah, Hadramaut, or Sa'dah.

Other sources, however, have stressed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the phase of drafting the final joint document began yesterday evening at the sixth round. But yet other sources said that while the main objective is to agree on a joint document, the "decisive process" of agreeing on a final draft is not restricted to any time limit and that that will be determined in the light of tangible realities.

They said: All the doors are open to all possibilities and we cannot bind ourselves to specific dates for the completion of our negotiations because a delay would then be interpreted as being the result of differences and stumbling. [passage omitted]

Bahrain

Amir Hails Egyptian Position on 'Incidents'

JN2901114895 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0900 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 29 Jan (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of the State of Bahrain, received Safwat al-Sharif, the Egyptian information minister, this morning on the occasion of his visit to Bahrain.

The Egyptian minister conveyed a message to his highness the amir from his brother Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, which expressed appreciation and amity to his highness the amir and his wishes for continued progress and prosperity for the Bahraini people.

His highness the amir welcomed the Egyptian information minister and hailed the historic and distinguished relations between the two fraternal states and peoples.

His highness hailed the role Egypt plays under the leadership of President Mubarak in service of the causes of the Arab and Islamic nations and his efforts to restore Arab solidarity and unity of Arab ranks.

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His highness praised the Egyptian president's position on the recent incidents in Bahrain and blessed the steps adopted by media officials in Bahrain and Egypt in order to transmit programs of the Egyptian Space Channel by Bahrain Television 24 hours a day. His highness said this step is an addition to the march of media cooperation between the two fraternal states.

His highness emphasized the prominent role of the media in showing the civilized and developing image of the Arab homeland and explaining its crucial causes. He expressed his wishes for continued success to those in charge of the media sector in Egypt.

The meeting was attended by Shaykh 'Ali Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah; Tariq al-Mu'ayyid, information minister; Dr. Halah Ahmad al-'Umran, Information Ministry assistant undersecretary for radio and television; and Mahmud Sami Ahmad 'Ismat, Egyptian ambassador to Bahrain.

Amir Receives Syrian Foreign Minister, Message

JN3001163495 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1420 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 30 Jan (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of Bahrain, has received a message from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. The message deals with the current Arab situation and ways of clearing the Arab atmosphere. It also deals with bilateral relations and issues of joint interest.

The message was conveyed by Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' when the amir of Bahrain received him here today.

During the meeting, his highness the amir of Bahrain welcomed the Syrian foreign minister. His highness expressed pride in the continued progress of Bahraini-Syrian relations. He praised the Syrian president's wise policy on all Arab and Islamic issues. He also praised the Syrian president's role in reviving Arab solidarity and coordination in the face of international changes to achieve our Arab nation's aspirations for progress and development.

His highness stressed Bahrain's interest in further cooperation with sisterly Syria in the various fields. His highness commended the results of the Alexandria summit seeking to close Arab ranks. His highness wished Syria under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad continued progress and prosperity.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on the latest developments in the Arab region, especially with regard to the Middle East peace process. They underlined the need for Syria's restoration of its territories on the Golan in implementation of relevant UN resolutions to achieve just, durable peace in the Middle East.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin- Mubarak Al Khalifah and Housing Minister Shaykh Khalid Bin-'Abdallah Al Khalifah.

Cabinet Satisfied With Security Situation

JN2901162495 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1450 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Manama, 29 Jan (WAKH)—The Council of Ministers of the State of Bahrain has expressed deep satisfaction with, and appreciation for, the efforts made by the Interior Ministry and the security agencies to safeguard security and stability in Bahrain. The Council of Ministers also expressed satisfaction with the speedy containment of the rioting and vandalism witnessed in some regions in Bahrain recently at the hands of an alien group that sought to undermine the country's security and stability.

The remarks were made by Muhammad Ibrahim al-Mutawwi', minister of state for cabinet affairs, at the conclusion of the cabinet's weekly session today under Prime Minister Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah. Al-Mutawwi' also said that the Council of Ministers praised the high sense of awareness demonstrated by the public in dealing with these fabricated incidents and the accompanying tendentious rumors. This position of the Bahraini public embodies loyalty to this homeland and its leadership and shows that the people are ready to ward off any attempt to undermine the country's security or cultural and development achievements, he said. [passage omitted]

UK-Based Opposition Groups Oppose 'Medieval' System

MM3001110695 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 27 Jan 95 p 3

[Report by Sharif Jum'ah: "Bahraini Opposition: Authorities Imposing Medieval System"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, Tehran, AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI—Bahraini opposition groups yesterday demanded that political reforms be made in their country and that three Shiite clerics deported from Bahrain earlier this month be granted asylum in Britain.

Representatives of the Bahrain Freedom Movement and the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain [IFLB], which are based in London, urged in a press conference the reinstatement of the parliament dissolved in 1975 and the release of those arrested during the unrest that has taken place in some Bahraini villages over the past few weeks.

Shaykh 'Ali Salman (27), a cleric deported from Bahrain on 15 January, said that the government is trying to preserve a medieval way of life and to shackle the people by a backward system.

He said that the oppositionists' aim is to use all legitimate means to achieve a dignified life in Bahrain. He

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also said that they are demanding to participate in running the country's affairs.

Salman said that the Bahraini authorities arrested him on 5 December after he assisted in collecting signatures on a petition demanding the reinstatement of the parliament elected in 1973.

He said that he was tortured and forced to withdraw his signature from the petition before being given a one-way ticket to Syria via Dubai on 15 January.

Two clerics were deported with him: Shaykh Hamzah al-Diri and Sayyid Haydar al-Satri.

The Bahraini authorities say that Salman was deported because he led a cell which was behind the unrest and troubles in the country.

Opposition groups said that the visit to London today by Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah is designed to protest against the presence in Britain of Salman and his deported companions.

In Tehran, a Bahraini Islamic opposition representative announced that a demonstrator who was seriously wounded in confrontations with the Bahraini police 10 days ago died of his wounds yesterday, Thursday, hence increasing the number of victims in recent troubles in the country to 17.

An IFLB official pointed out that Radi Mansur al-Hajji (30), from Bani Jamrah, died at al-Sulaymaniyah Hospital after being in a coma for a few days after receiving a shot in the head.

The source said that the funeral took place in Bani Hamzah without any incidents yesterday, Thursday.

The Bahraini authorities say that only one person died in the confrontations which Bahrain has witnessed in recent weeks between the police and demonstrators demanding more democracy. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Council of Ministers Briefed on Yemen Negotiations

LD3001193195 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1528 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 30 Jan—The Council of Ministers held its weekly meeting at al-Yamamah Palace this afternoon, 30 January, under the chairmanship of HRH Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, second deputy prime minister, minister of defence, and aviation and inspector-general.

In a statement to the SAUDI PRESS AGENCY [SPA], Minister of Information 'Ali al-Sha'ir said: At the start of the session, HRH the second deputy prime minister discussed some local issues, led by following up the implementation of the instructions of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, servant of the two holy places, to the minister of finance and national economy to give priority to the dispensation of payments prescribed in the new budget that are due to citizens, contractors and company owners. [passage omitted]

Minister al-Sha'ir went on to say: The second deputy prime minister briefed the council on the progress of the negotiations between the Saudi and Yemeni delegations, pointing out that a spirit of fraternity prevailed at the meetings and expressing his hope that a common perception would be reached soon to end the affair in a way that would achieve the good of the two brotherly peoples. [passage omitted]

The Council of Ministers reviewed the most important political, security and economic events and developments at the Arab and international levels, and it was briefed on events in regions of tension in general and with regard to the Muslim people of Bosnia in particular.

In this context, the council expressed its deep appreciation of the campaign to collect donations to help the people of Bosnia- Herzegovina continue their steadfastness against Serb tyranny. The charity week was started yesterday evening with a donation of 30 million riyals from the personal account of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, servant of the two holy places, to help Bosnia in its long ordeal. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Salih Rules Out Use of Force in Border Dispute

NC3001222095 Paris AFP in English 1923 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanaa, Jan 30 (AFP)—Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, whose country is locked in a border dispute with Saudi Arabia, said Monday [30 January] that such disputes could not be settled by force.

"The settlement of border problems does not come through facts on the ground and recourse to force, but through dialogue and understanding," said Salih, quoted by the official news agency SABA'.

"Yemen rejects war and condemns violence," he said in a speech to mark the start Tuesday of Ramadan, the Moslem month-long fast.

Salih on Friday accused Saudi Arabia of massing troops along the border with Yemen before withdrawing them to 15 kilometres (nine miles) from the frontier. Riyadh denied the accusation.

The Saudi cabinet met Monday to discuss Yemeni-Saudi negotiations which began on January 23 in a bid to resolve the border dispute, the official Saudi news agency SPA said.

Defence Minister Prince Sultan Bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz, heading the Saudi delegation to the talks in Riyadh,

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briefed ministers on the progress of negotiations, which he said were being held "in a fraternal spirit."

Prince Sultan also voiced hope that the two sides would "soon reach a joint approach" to an accord to settle the conflict.

Yemen and Saudi Arabia are in dispute over the provinces of Najran, Jizan and 'Asir close to the border which were assigned to Saudi Arabia under a 1934 treaty.

Sanaa argues the treaty expired in September 1992 but has said it is willing to renegotiate the agreement.

Both countries pledged to avoid a military escalation following a January 10 border clash which diplomats said left 40 Yemenis and 14 Saudis dead.

Grenades Thrown at Russian Embassy in Sanaa

NC2901162495 Paris AFP in English 1446 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanaa, Jan 29 (AFP)—Assailants hurled grenades at the Russian embassy in Sanaa last week, damaging offices in the mission, a senior Yemeni security official said.

The official gave no details on the suspects.

Yemeni opposition sources said Islamic militants carried out the attack to protest the Russian military offensive in the breakaway republic of Chechnya, while the governing party blamed the opposition for it.

"Unknown assailants a week ago Sunday [22 January] threw two grenades at the Russian embassy in Sanaa, and the explosion of one of the devices caused damage in offices," the senior security official said.

He added that the authorities had launched an investigation into the attack, the first against a foreign embassy here since a two- month civil war in Yemen ended in July.

The "22nd of May" weekly run by Yemen's ruling party, the General People's Congress, accused opposition parties of carrying out the attack for domestic political reasons.

Opposition Front Names Leaders, Assigns Duties

MM3001110095 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 27 Jan 95 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Opposition Front Assigns Responsibilities for Nine Sectors; al-Jifri Elected 'MAWJ' Leader and Salim Salih Deputy Leader"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—The National Front of the Yemeni Opposition [MAWJ] has elected 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Jifri, leader of the Sons of Yemen League, as its leader and Salim Salih Muhammad, former assistant secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party and former Presidential Council member, as deputy leader. It also announced the assignment of responsibilities for nine specialized bureaus to members of its Executive Committee. This came in a press release by the MAWJ leadership yesterday, of which AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT received a copy.

The distribution of jurisdictions and responsibilities included the following:

1. Sulayman Nasir Mas'ud, official in charge of the Research and Studies Bureau.
2. Muhsin Muhammad Abu-Bakr Bin-Farid, official in charge of the Information Bureau.
3. 'Abdallah 'Abd-al-Majid al-Asnaj, official in charge of the Foreign Affairs Bureau.
4. Brigadier General Salih 'Ubayd Ahmad, official in charge of the Security Bureau.
5. Dr. Hazim 'Ali Shukri, official in charge of Social Affairs and Welfare Bureau.
6. Sayf Muhammad Fadl al-'Uzaybi, official in charge of the Follow-up Bureau.
7. Dhu-al-Nun Zayn Shakir, official in charge of the Popular Action Bureau.
8. Brigadier General 'Umar 'Ali al-'Attas, official in charge of the Military Affairs Bureau.
9. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Bakiri, official in charge of the Tribal Affairs Bureau.

The statement said that the various bureaus would begin to prepare the executive programs for their work with the aim of fulfilling the objectives of MAWJ. A responsible source has been quoted as saying that the front would concentrate on political and informational activities inside the country to project "the position of our people who reject the regime's practices and to stand by our people and alleviate their suffering in the security, living conditions, political, and social fields" and also to "coordinate positions and activities with all opposition factions and figures." The MAWJ statement said that its activities abroad would be "confined to highlighting the opposition activities at home and the Yemeni people's suffering under conditions of repression, injustice, and starvation, holding contacts with all regional, Arab, and international bodies and organizations, and intensifying internal and external pressure on Sanaa until it accepts comprehensive national reconciliation."

Oil Minister Discusses Natural Gas Developments

95AE0017A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 19 Jan 95 p 9

["Text" of "exclusive" interview with Oil Minister Faysal Bin-Shamlan by Randah Taqi-al-Din in Paris; date not given—first five paragraphs are AL-HAYAH introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris—Yemeni Oil Minister Faysal Bin-Shamlan has disclosed in an exclusive interview, given to AL-HAYAH in Paris during Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's visit, that the Yemeni

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Government will determine at the end of this month which of the three offers submitted by Total, Enron, and Exxon it will chosen to implement the Yemeni gas export project.

The minister added that the project is based on exporting 5 million tons of gas annually throughout a period of 25 years, beginning in the year 2001 if project implementation starts in 1995. The minister said that Yemen's oil production stands at 230,000 barrels daily at present and that no increase is expected in the current year because there is no new production.

Regarding the ongoing negotiations between Total, a French corporation, and Canoxy, a corporation operating in Yemen, on Total's use of Canoxy's line, the minister said that the Yemeni Council of Ministers has decided that the state, which owns the country's oil export pipelines, will not permit any of the parties concerned to impede oil exports by demanding more than the share to which it is entitled. He added that Total can now use Canadian Oxy's pipeline.

Bin-Shamlan also disclosed that 'Ali Salih has notified the president of Elf, a French oil corporation, that the corporation has to resume its activity in the border area where a Russian oil company also owns a prospecting permit and where Elf has suspended its activity for "security considerations." The Yemeni president asked Elf to resume its work in the area, where he believes security exists.

Here is the text of the interview:

[Taki-al-Din] Yemen will become a gas exporting country. Can you give us details of the project to produce and export Yemen's gas?

[Bin-Shamlan] Three corporations have expressed interest in the project: Hunt-Exxon, a U.S. corporation that produces oil as a partner in the Ma'rib No. 18 concession; Enron, a U.S. corporation; and Total, a French corporation. The project calls for producing a certain quantity of state owned gas in Yemen's fields, for constructing a pipeline to a coastal loading point, for building a loading terminal, and for liquefying the gas and transporting it to buyers. As part of the project, a branch line will be extended from this pipeline to the Sanaa area to supply the gas the government needs for its domestic projects, especially for electric power production.

The project's preliminary plan calls for transporting 100 million cubic feet annually, with the possibility of increasing the volume to 200 million cubic feet. The current project is based on exporting 5 million tons annually for a period of 25 years. This figure takes into account that the country's gas consumption will be the current consumption rate plus 8 percent annually. The project will also have to produce the largest amount possible of butane gas, which is used for cooking purposes, for both domestic consumption and exportation. This final phase of the project also includes a stipulation that this gas will be transferred to the state free of charge and that the state will obtain liquefied gas at a price below the posted price. These stipulations are not negotiable.

Gas is found in various fields in the area where Exxon-Hunt is producing, and in other fields. Exxon-Hunt's oil operations in Yemen will end in the year 2005. That is when the contract the two corporations have with the State of Yemen expires.

[Taqi-al-Din] When will implementation of the gas project start?

[Bin-Shamlan] We are now in the phase of offer analysis. The offers are being examined currently by two consultants, the first is Nalcuza [name as transliterated] Corporation, which is headquartered in Geneva and headed by Nordine Ait Laoussine, an oil expert and former Algerian energy minister. The second consultant is Arthur Doolittle Corporation. The two corporations will present to the government an analysis of the three offers (made by Total, Exxon-Hunt, and Enron) in the latter part of this month (26-27 January). The government will then decide to whom to award the bid.

[Taqi-al-Din] When will exports begin?

[Bin-Shamlan] If a contract is concluded with one of the three corporations in 1995, we hope that the exports stipulated in the contract will begin in the year 2000, 2001, or a date close to these years.

[Taqi-al-Din] Yemen will export 5 million tons of gas annually, or nearly the equivalent of the volume that Qatar will export from the Qatari gas project. Will Yemen become an important gas exporting country, especially since its oil production is small?

[Bin-Shamlan] No study has been conducted to date on Yemen's gas or oil reserves. There are vast expanses of the country (more than 25 provinces) that have not been exploited to date. Some companies that have invested previously want now to reanalyze their previous data and want to stay in the same fields in which they existed previously. For example, the contract of Occidental, a U.S corporation, has expired. But the company has asked to renegotiate to stay in the country in accordance with a new agreement. This is what we are considering now. Occidental is the first corporation to ask for a change in the partnership contract terms. We will certainly amend the previous conditions, which were established under different circumstances and at a time when oil prices ranged from $20 to $21 a barrel. Prices now range from $15 to $16 per barrel. We want to establish a balance between our reliance on gas and our reliance on oil.

[Taqi-al-Din] At what level does Yemen's oil production stand currently?

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[Bin-Shamlan] Currently we produce 230,000 barrels per day, of which nearly 170,000 barrels are produced in Ma'rib Province and nearly 60,000 barrels from al-Masilah Province, located in Hadhramaut Plateau. There is a tendency now to increase al-Masilah production and reduce Ma'rib production. Total Corporation produces a small quantity in Shabwah. Production will not grow this year. Development of the Shabwah field will be started this year, but production will not start this year. No new production is expected this year.

[Taqi-al-Din] It seems that Total has encountered difficulties in negotiating with Canoxy Corporation on the use of Canoxy's pipeline to transport its production. It has been reported that the Yemeni Government has stepped in to resolve the problem. What about this issue?

[Bin-Shamlan] We now have three main pipelines to transport oil. They are: the Ma'rib pipeline, which goes to Ra's 'Isa on the Red Sea; al-Nimr pipeline, which goes from al-'Alam to Bi'r 'Ali on the Arabian Sea; and al-Masilah pipeline, which goes from the Eastern Hadhramaut Plateau to the al-Shihr area on the Arabian Sea. This one is Canoxy's pipeline. There is a possibility that a fourth pipeline will be built from the northeastern desert to the al-Ghaydah area on the Arabian Sea. Whether by force or in fact, all these pipelines will undoubtedly belong to the government, because the government pays the value of these installations in oil. Actually, in practice, the pipelines belong to the government and not to the corporations, which only use them. However, we have found that some companies have not agreed at the appropriate time on the conditions for the use of the pipelines. Therefore, we have said that as long as these pipelines belong to the government, then it is better that the government make the decisions on their use. The government will not permit any party involved to impede oil exports by demanding more than the share to which it is entitled. Consequently, we have decided that the government will agree with the current pipeline operator and give it oil and it will grant the same terms to the new pipeline operator. In the future, there could be more than one pipeline operator. But the old operator will be entitled to recover its real cost from receiving the oil of a new operator. If the first operator does not recover all its capital expenses, the new operator will have to pay a percentage of the operational costs from its production that enters into the pipeline concerned. We have conveyed this decision to all the corporations involved to prevent a recurrence of what has developed between Canoxy and Total. Total operates in Shabwah Province only, which is close to the area where Canoxy operates in the same plateau.

[Taqi-al-Din] You have met with the president of Elf corporation, who has also visited the Yemeni president. Elf has a prospecting concession on Yemen's border, but it has suspended its operations. What transpired at the meeting?

[Bin-Shamlan] President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih told the president of Elf, a French corporation, that his corporation is procrastinating in its work at a time when it has the biggest concession area, amounting to 48,000 square km. The president told them that they have to work promptly and use this concession. They said that they feel at times that they cannot reach their areas because of security considerations. The president told them to disregard the areas where they think there is no security and to work in the other areas. They asked to have concessions in other areas. This is another question that has no connection with the issue at hand. They were told that if they have such fears, then we do not agree with them, considering that a number of corporations have not suspended their work. ARCO, for example, has continued to operate. Their response was that more meetings have to be held with the Ministry of Oil regarding this.

[Taqi-al-Din] How about rehabilitating Aden Refinery?

[Bin-Shamlan] There are a number of interested Japanese, U.S., and French companies. But it is our opinion that it is better that we conduct the studies so we will be able to establish the specifications that we want and so we will be able to get, in light of the experience of the past 40 years in refining activity, the equipment that we believe best fits Aden's climate and weather. This is why we decided to conduct the study on the phase concerning preparation of bid documents. We will then invite bids from companies wishing to do the work. As part of the bid terms, we will ask, without compelling anybody, for a description of the financial facilities that the company concerned is willing to offer. These facilities will, of course, be one of the elements that determine who wins the bid. We hope that this will be done by the middle of next month. A study has been completed by a British company. It will now be presented to companies wishing to do this job. We have established excellent cooperation with Malaysia, which is refining 30,000-40,000 barrels of oil in Aden daily. Aden Refinery refines nearly 85,000 barrels daily. Its refining capacity is 170,000 barrels daily. We do not wish to put it back into operation yet because we are making some changes there.

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Envoy Urges United Arab Stance on NPT Signing

NC3101122995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1155 GMT 31 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 31 Jan (MENA)—Nabil Najm, Iraq's permanent envoy to the Arab League, stated that his country supports any Arab position that calls for linking the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] by the Arab countries with Israel's agreement to sign the Treaty.

In a press statement issued today, the Iraqi ambassador stressed the need to link the renewed signing with Israel's signing and its agreement to submit all its nuclear facilities to international inspection, since Israel is the only party in the region that has not signed the NPT.

He called on all the Arab countries to adopt the stance that is based on protecting pan-Arab security.

Airspace 'Violations' Reported to Arab League

JN3001091195 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0720 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 30 Jan (INA)—Iraq has again informed the Arab League that the Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers have continued to provide facilities to U.S., British, and French planes, thus allowing them to violate Iraqi airspace and seriously jeopardize Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity.

In a letter to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al- Majid, the Iraqi permanent representative to the Arab League added that the aforementioned planes continued to violate Iraqi airspace, flying from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, during the period 16- 23 January. These planes carried out 582 hostile air sorties during that period.

A list attached to the letter detailed these violations.

Saddam, Commanders Discuss Equipment, Training

JN2801173595 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Staff Field Marshal President Saddam Husayn, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, may God watch over him, has chaired a meeting attended by several military commanders. During the meeting, the conferees discussed the situation of the Army in terms of equipment and training.

The meeting was attended by Staff General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, minister of defense, and Staff General Iyad Futayyih Khalifah al- Rawi, chief of staff of the Army.

Saddam Chairs Revolution Command Council Meeting

JN2801194495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1925 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 28 Jan (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has chaired a meeting of the Revolution Command Council. The meeting was attended by Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi, chief of the Presidential Office.

Saddam Chairs Cabinet Meeting, Hails Patience

JN2901203595 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God watch over him, has said: Our march is not a traditional one. Therefore, we are always trying to maintain a plan for everything to develop toward the best and the highest [words indistinct].

His excellency added: Drawing up clear ranks, fair degrees, and sound measures for rights, obligations, and performance will win the people's support and enthusiasm. It will also encourage those concerned to exert further efforts and to offer sacrifices, and consequently, will result in creativity.

His excellency the leader president, may God watch over him, made these statements when he chaired the sixth session of the Council of Ministers.

His excellency said that by adhering to steadfastness and patience and by achieving the impossible in terms of construction and jihad, the Iraqis have become, God be praised, an example for nations. Despite this bright picture, there are degrees in their patience and also in their behavior. Some have not abandoned some of their consumption habits. Others are behaving in a certain way but do not intend to cause harm. However, due to personal reasons, social pressures, or lack of awareness, they continue these habits and cause harm to others.

During its sixth session, the Council of Ministers discussed issues on its agenda, which included organizational topics, and took the necessary decisions.

SAIRI Head Views Saddam Trial, Refugees, Embargo

NC2801173095 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Swiss television's French-language channel conducted an interview with His Eminence Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], after his arrival at his residence in Geneva. The interview dealt with many substantive issues related to the situation in Iraq and the serious violations of human rights there.

Asked why he was visiting Switzerland, His Eminence al-Hakim replied: The main reason is that the Iraqi people are today facing two serious problems that need a prompt solution. The first is the mass killing and genocide, which qualify Saddam to be a war criminal. Switzerland is the country that has been concerned with trials of war criminals. We therefore must proceed from here to try Saddam for his crimes.

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Al-Hakim added: The second problem is the growing number of refugees who flee Iraq because of the oppressive practices. The number of refugees has dramatically increased, and they live on the Iranian border, although several thousands of them have entered Iran. These refugees need international action to address all their problems.

On SAIRI's preparations, His Eminence al-Hakim said: We have made broad preparations for this trial. So far, we have collected (?more than) 30,000 documents at the Documentary Center for Human Rights in Iraq. They can be used as conclusive evidence condemning Saddam for committing genocide crimes against humanity and using destructive weapons against the Iraqi people. In this area, we are cooperating with all forces.

Asked about the method of bringing Saddam to trial, the SAIRI leader said: We believe that the UN Security Council should form a committee, like the one on human rights, to follow Saddam's genocide crimes and present the documents to a special court. The least the court can do is to sentence Saddam in absentia and consequently ban political dealings with him.

In another development, His Eminence al-Hakim received in his residence in Geneva the British and German ambassadors and the minister plenipotentiaries of Italy and Austria. In the meeting, al-Hakim discussed the developments in Iraq, (?the way) tyrant Saddam is dealing with Iraq and its peoples of all sects and nationalities, the international position toward the Iraqi regime and toward the UN resolutions against Iraq, and the world's position toward the Iraqi people.

His eminence said that as soon as it receives oil money, the Iraqi regime will re-arm itself and once again attack the Gulf states. He said the regime believes that the Gulf states are unable to cover the cost of another Desert Storm, and is pursuing a policy of depleting the resources of those states.

His eminence also explained the positions of the Iraqi Army. He said the Army rejects the regime and is prepared to cooperate with the people. He said the mujahidin sounded out the Army and made sure of this preparedness. He pointed to wide immigration by Iraqis as a result of the oppression of tyrant Saddam's regime.

Al-Hakim blamed France for normalizing its relations with the regime, saying that by doing this, France disavows its human rights record and its responsibilities within the international community. He said France is dealing with a vanishing regime, and Saddam's circumstances do not allow him to serve France's interests. He said maintaining the security of the region and destroying the weapons of the regime [words indistinct] the way the regime handles things. Alienating the people serves neither the security nor the future of the region, he said.

His eminence said that as far as the embargo is concerned, it is possible to distinguish between the people and the regime by opening relief centers and enabling the people to receive relief material.

During the meeting, the search for a mechanism to help the Iraqi people and lift the siege on them was discussed.

West Said To Support SAIRI Plan To Oust Saddam

NC2901164195 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Diplomatic sources in Vienna have said that the Western countries have voiced no opposition to the plan that Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim [leader of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, SAIRI] recently presented to the Iraqi opposition factions in London. The plan includes several organized steps to speed up the overthrow of the ruling regime in Baghdad. The sources said the Western countries are holding consultations among themselves on the future of the political system in Iraq.

In a statement to our radio's correspondent, the sources said representatives of those Western countries in London and Geneva welcomed the idea of the Army leading the upcoming popular uprising against the regime after they became convinced that Saddam Husayn had lost the support of the people and the military establishment in his country and that the situation is now ripe for a change. [passage indistinct]

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Return of 'Arava Land to Jordan Completed

TA3001121295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel has now returned to Jordan all the land she has taken over in the 'Arava desert, and today the two sides are formally marking the new border between them from Ne'ot Hakikar to Elat. The only parts not transferred are to be used for security patrols.

Further north, in the Bet She'an area, preparations were completed to move the border in accordance with the Israel-Jordan peace agreement. Army bulldozers are preparing the ground and a new border fence is being built with the intention of completing the work by 10 February. Under the accord, Israeli farmers are being allowed to work land now officially under Jordanian jurisdiction.

Peres Expects 'No Real Changes' on NPT Disagreement

TA3101113795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 31 Jan 95

[Report by Ya'el Ayalon—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ayalon] One day before he leaves for a meeting with the Egyptian president, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres found the time to tour Tel Aviv. His first stop was a local high school, where the students asked him: Is the government considering lifting the closure imposed on the territories any time soon?

[Peres] We have told the Palestinian Authority that if it takes what measures it can—we are not asking for miracles—the closure will definitely be lifted. We are awaiting its response.

[Ayalon] To what measures are you referring?

[Peres] I mean measures aimed at reducing the threat of terror, such as the arrest of culprits, the prevention of certain activities, and so on. Naturally, I will not go into further detail.

[Ayalon] Lifting the closure, therefore, depends on Palestinian moves, but no Palestinian prisoners are expected to be released at this stage, Peres declared. Peres was also asked to comment on the prime minister's remark that terror is a strategic threat.

[Peres] I did not attend the cabinet meeting in question. I do not know what the term strategic threat means; it is not clear to me. It is clear, however, that terror is a threat that impacts on our entire strategy. We will have to deal with it; however, just as when a new type of weapon or tactic is introduced in a war, it takes time until a countermeasure is found. I am certain we will find countermeasures against suicide terrorism.

[Ayalon] It is impossible to ignore yesterday's events: the expected cancellation of the capital gains tax. Is this how the government makes decisions? the students asked the visitor.

[Unidentified Student] The government has recently been showing signs of instability; ministers lash out at each other, and the prime minister attacks them. There still are two years until the next elections, but if the current situation continues, Labor might lose. How do you view the issue and how, in your opinion, should it be handled?

[Peres] Truly, what the ministers are doing causes damage to them and to the government, and jeopardizes our chances of winning the elections. I believe that the party and its leaders must call the ministers to order.

[Ayalon] Minister Peres refused to comment on his upcoming visit to Egypt and particularly about the issue of whether Israel will make some gesture to Egypt on the NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty] issue. I expect no real changes on this issue, he said. We have our own stands, and Egypt accepts that.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1100 GMT on 31 January adds that "the Likud has called on the prime minister to continue Israel's current nuclear policy and not to make mistakes that will be irreversible" and "called on Rabin to make sure that Peres does not reach any compromise with Egypt regarding Israel's participation in the NPT."]

'Unilateral' Move on NPT Said Under Consideration

TA3101101295 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 31 Jan 95 pp A1, A2

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Israel is considering making a unilateral gesture on the nuclear issue in order to resolve its serious dispute with Egypt on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT], which has soured relations between the two states.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres is leaving on a brief visit to Cairo tomorrow to meet with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak on the nuclear issue.

Peres met with his Egyptian counterpart, 'Amr Musa, in Switzerland over the weekend for lengthy discussions on the NPT. They clarified their countries' positions and decided to continue the dialogue at a higher level, with Mubarak's participation.

Peres conferred with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin yesterday on the contacts with Egypt. In the deliberations Peres held prior to his trip to Switzerland, ideas were raised about possible Israeli moves to facilitate a compromise with Egypt without harming vital security needs.

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One of the proposals, which was rejected, was that Israel would announce its readiness to participate in the U.S. initiative to formulate a new treaty that would freeze the manufacture of plutonium and enriched uranium, the basic components of nuclear arms. [passage omitted]

In a meeting in Cairo on 3 January, Musa proposed to Peres that Israel agree to launch talks on nuclear demilitarization through a gradual process to be implemented over 10-15 years. In recent weeks, Israeli officials reiterated that Israel has reached the limit of its concessions and will not make gestures or additional moves in the nuclear field because this involves a highly sensitive issue which touches on the very foundations of its national security.

The opposition to concessions stems from the concern that Egypt will not settle for them and will continue to pressure Israel, just as it has so far ignored the steps taken by Israel in the arms control area. One of Egypt's proposals, which Israel has so far totally rejected, is to set up a team of experts within the framework of the multilateral arms control talks to study ways of creating a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons. Israel announced that it is opposed to a separate discussion on nuclear weapons, demanding that the deliberations include all types of weapons, both conventional and nonconventional.

Peres will visit Washington next week and will report to the administration on the outcome of his talks with the Egyptian leaders on the NPT. He will be followed by Musa, who will be going to Washington to try to resolve the crisis created between Egypt and the United States over the nuclear issue.

Rally Speakers Call For Suspending Peace Talks

TA2901155495 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 29 Jan 95 p A3

[Report by Yosi Hatuni]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Some 7,000 people yesterday participated in a solidarity rally to the memory of the 21 fatalities in the Bet Lid Junction terrorist attack, seven days after the explosion. The rally was organized by Herzliyya Mayor Eli Landau and was participated in by 44 mayors and local council heads, including the mayors of Giv'at Shmu'el, Bene Beraq, Ramat Gan, Netanya, and Petah Tiqva, and the Ramat Hasharon council head.

The participants called for the political process to be suspended and a "reassessment," as urged by President 'Ezer Weizman last Sunday immediately after the attack. The demonstrators carried placards saying: "Jewish Blood Cannot Be Spilled With Impunity," "A Cruel Peace," "The Peace Criminals Are Responsible for This Murder," "A Government of Idiots," "Rabin to Abarvanel [mental hospital]," "Death to Arabs," "Rabin Go Home," and "Rabin, Wait." Hundreds of memorial candles were lit at the site.

Hundreds of police and border policemen safeguarded the event and a police helicopter hovered overhead. A police command unit was located at the nearby Ashmoret prison. Despite several disturbances nobody was detained. [passage omitted]

Israel's chief rabbi, Yisra'el Lau, said: "We have not come to a political rally, we have came to jointly express the pain and sorrow and stress the national unity along the path of suffering and peace. [passage omitted]

"The time has come to think and say that the Palestinian people might not be ripe for the peace process," Lau said. [passage omitted]

Commentary Assails Christopher Over Syrian Talks

TA3001153795 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 30 Jan 95 p B1

[Commentary by Dan Margalit: "Al-Asad Is Waiting for Russia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] When a Peace Now delegation from the United States visited Syria, the Syrian deputy foreign minister asserted insolently that his country had never attacked Israel. In MA'ARIV, Ben Kaspit quoted Carol Zeiber [name as transliterated], a delegation member, as saying that in the years she lived in Israel the downpour of Syrian shells was not just drops of rain on the Galilee. The Syrian, however, stood firm. So what will Tom Segev get out of it if Hafiz al-Asad responds to his public call to invite him for an impressions-gathering visit to Damascus if telling lies is still the rule in the Syrian capital?

Even if there is some point in paying such a visit, neither an Israeli journalist nor a well-wishing U.S. Jew are the visitors now called for in the Syrian capital. The one staying clear of Damascus is Warren Christopher, which is a pity, because when the United State's senior diplomat spoke two days ago in support of painful decisions soon to be made by Israel and Syria, official Jerusalem responded with a mixture of anger and mockery. Nothing is happening and Christopher is one of the main reasons for that situation.

Even Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich did not hide his frustration in assessing that Christopher is busy with Mexico's currency crisis and the Bosnia issue. The conclusion is embarrassing: Either Christopher does not know, or he has decided to hide the setback. Even Rabinovich's talks with Walid al-Mu'allim were put off because the Syrian ambassador simply did not turn up at his Washington office.

Has al-Asad withdrawn from his strategic decision to make peace? Senior right-wing opposition members claim that the government must understand that the situation has changed. Al-Asad's decision to make peace was born with the collapse of the USSR. Even he has read Francis Fukuyama's "The End of History." The

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Syrian government now believes that Boris Yeltsin's days are numbered and that his successor might renew Russian imperialist policy, which led it to the "warm waters" of the Middle East in 1772. Al-Asad apparently believes it pays to wait, and that in general patience pays off.

Is that the wish of the opposition? All the polls show that Binyamin Netanyahu, their candidate for prime minister, is dramatically leading his rival Yitzhaq Rabin. Is a peace-making al- Asad seen by the Likud as the main danger to the party's return to power?

All diplomats can say is that they do not have any information confirming that Syria has abandoned the process, but they have heard Shim'on Peres declare that there are no signs that al-Asad is interested in a dialogue with Israel. Syria's hidden intentions have to be put to the test.

The government is interested in getting the process moving. In order to make a dialogue easier, Jerusalem has decided to give up its demand for gestures and wants to talk business. The aim is a Rabin-al-Asad meeting under Bill Clinton's auspices. For what purpose?

Before that can take place there has to be a forceful American move. Dennis Ross has disappeared from the horizon, and Christopher is called a "catastrophe" by Israeli and Syrian officials, but somebody has to tie the ends, and say in the name of the last superpower that full peace in return for full withdrawal is the name of the game. It is pity that the United States is keeping mum, especially since the window of opportunity—if it has not yet been slammed shut—is clear:

—Israel is prepared to withdraw to the international border, but Syria wants the territories it captured in the 1950's. This runs counter to the famous preamble to Security Council Resolution 242 which forbids capturing land by force, and does not conform with a similar reference in the Camp David accords.

—There must be demilitarization on both sides of the border, based on the Camp David principles. Tiny Israel cannot give up kilometer for kilometer. Anwar al-Sadat understood that, but al- Asad does not give a hoot.

—The Syrians are not giving enough time to the implementation of the agreement. If and when Christopher comes to the region, he has to remind them that al-Sadat opened his embassy in Israel before getting all of Sinai back. Why should al-Asad get more?

Al-Asad, being naturally suspicious, believes that Rabin is merely threatening him that the Likud will take over power. There are, however, many diplomatic and media elements in Israel which can report to the Syrian president privately that it is no coincidence that Meretz ministers are not making it tough for Rabin and Peres in negotiations with the Syrian leader. Some of them even whisper that in view of al-Asad's rigidity, it is doubtful whether they themselves can suggest their voters agree to a peace accord with his signature on it, especially if he is waiting for bad old Mother Russia.

Trade Ministry Readies for Fight Against U.S. Demands

TA3101121395 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (MAMON supplement) in Hebrew 31 Jan 95 p 2

[Report by Navit Zomer]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prior to the visit by U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown, who arrives on Sunday, the Ministry of Industry and Trade is preparing for a tough fight against U.S. demands to impose further restrictions on trade ties with Israel.

The Americans want to force on Israel a serious change in regulations governing the source, which determine what is an Israeli product and what percentage of foreign components it may contain. The U.S. aim is to equate the regulations governing the source for Israel with the tough terms meted out to Mexico and Canada under NAFTA.

A senior Industry and Trade Ministry source said Israel will warn Brown and his team not to impose tougher conditions on Israel. The ministry will also insist on an improvement in government procurement so that it matches what is available to the Europeans: for example, participation in tenders for airports and public electricity companies, which have so far been closed to Israeli firms.

To prepare for the visit, the Industry and Trade Ministry has hired the services of a U.S. firm specializing in tariffs, which is advising the ministry on the repercussions of the demanded changes.

Brown is coming with a 60-member delegation made up of technological experts, heads of firms, and senior administration officials. During the four-day visit, Brown will meet with Industry and Trade Minister Mikha Harish and Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, as well as the ministers of finance and transportation.

At the conclusion of his visit here, Brown will participate in a meeting with the four ministers in charge of trade in Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and the autonomy to be held in Taba. The initiators of the meeting are Minister Harish and his Egyptian counterpart. Brown will discuss Jordan's involvement in promoting economic issues in the region.

Police Discuss Separation Plan; Data on Attacks

TA3001111695 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 30 Jan 95 p 2

[Report by Bill Hutman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Discussions began last night at the Police Ministry on sealing the borders with Judaea

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and Samaria, after the cabinet yesterday ordered Police Minister Moshe Shahal to come up with a separation plan.

The separation plan being drawn up is to center around placing at least 2,000 policemen on patrol and checkpoint duties along the Green Line, a senior police source said.

The plan is to emphasize manpower and state-of-the-art border patrol technology, and not physical barriers such as fences. New roads, however, would be built along the old border to give police easier access, the source added.

The plan would be based on the work done by police over a year ago on methods for sealing Judaea and Samaria along the Green Line. The plan is to be completed within a month.

At yesterday's cabinet meeting, Shahal reiterated that, for security reasons, police want to achieve the "maximum possible separation between the two populations."

Shahal also revealed that he had given the go-ahead for dogs to be used by police patrols along the Green Line, a move that last year was halted after opponents said it was reminiscent of methods used by the Nazis.

"I intend to notify the Knesset of our intention to put these dogs, whose training was completed a year ago, into service on patrols and for tracing explosives." Shahal said. The dogs are to be put into operation "in the near future," he added.

"The arrangement between Israel and the Palestinians cannot continue if the personal safety of Israeli citizens cannot be guaranteed," Shahal said at the meeting, according to a statement.

"It is unacceptable that mothers should have to fear for their children's lives in the center of the country," Shahal said.

Shahal met with Inspector-General Asaf Hefetz and other senior police brass for several hours in his office last night, to begin working on the separation plan.

Hefetz told reporters earlier the police need 10,000 new officers "over the next three to four years," largely to respond to the expected continued rise in terror.

Hefetz said that, without increasing police ranks by 50 percent, it would be difficult to prevent terrorists like those responsible for the Bet Lid bombing from entering the country.

"The addition of 10,000 policemen over the next three to four years is essential if we are to properly face the problems both in security and crime," Hefetz said.

Within the Green Line 59 persons were killed in terror attacks last year, compared to 19 in 1993, according to figures released by police yesterday.

However, the overall number of terror incidents—from suicide bombings to stonings—inside the Green Line dropped from 2,855 to 2,294. The higher number of deaths reflected the increased use of suicide bombings by Palestinian terror groups.

Stoning and fire bombing incidents also increased within the Green Line between 1993 and 1994. The major drop was in car torchings, after Jerusalem police launched an undercover operation to contain them.

Hefetz said police are preparing for "a very difficult period in terms of terror and keeping the peace. Even during a time when there is a peace process you need many more forces, not just in Jerusalem and along the borders, but everywhere."

Likud Split on West Bank Plans; Eytan on 'Arafat Talks

TA2801134495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] There are conflicting opinions within the Likud with regard to the presentation of a political plan for Judaea and Samaria. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that, this week, Knesset Member [MK] Ari'el Sharon demanded that Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu present the public with clear plans from the Israeli right wing with regard to the future of Judaea and Samaria. MK Eliyahu Ben-Elisar, chairman of the Likud's political committee, said, however, that the Likud will not draw any maps because its plan is clear and based on the Camp David accords. Our correspondent notes that Likud leaders are also divided over whether to continue negotiating an interim arrangement with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan said that a right-wing government should negotiate with 'Arafat, but its representatives at the talks should be a petty bureaucrat and a border policeman. MK Eytan said he does not recommend abandoning the Gaza Strip. If Gaza becomes a sanctuary for terrorists, he asserted, we should move in with tanks and put an end to the matter. We will go anywhere and kill members of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad, as well as anyone else who seeks to harm the State of Israel, Eytan said.

Settlers, IDF Clash Over West Bank Outpost

Settlers Seize Evacuated Post

TA3001200695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tonight a group of settlers seized an outpost between the Qedumim and Shavey Shomron settlements evacuated by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops last night.

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The settlers told our correspondent Gay Qotev that they were seizing the spot in order not to leave a vacuum that might be filled by undesirable elements.

IDF Declares Post Closed Military Area

TA3101053995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 31 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Last night, settlers seized an evacuated IDF [Israel Defense Forces] outpost between the Qedumim and Shavey Shomron settlements. Immediately afterwards, however, soldiers arrived at the site and declared it a closed military area.

Palestinians Said To Recruit 'Collaborators'

TA2801133995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Palestinian security services have been operating in Arab population centers inside Israel. Their purpose: getting Arabs who collaborate with Israel to work for the Palestinians, turning them into double agents. The Palestinian forces have also been trying to locate other Arabs acting inside the autonomous areas on Israel's behalf. They hope in this way to learn the modus operandi of the Israeli secret services. This was revealed by Qol Yisra'el this morning in a special report that has drawn sharp reaction from Israeli officials.

Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur said he will not accept collaborators working against Israel. Gur said the security forces will take all measures to prevent this.

The Likud says the fact that Jibril al-Rujub, who heads the Palestinian security services, has dared to act inside Israel is a direct result of Prime Minister Rabin's shaky policies. Those were the words of the head of the Likud Knesset caucus, 'Uzi Landau, who called on Rabin to break off cooperation with Palestinian security and intelligence forces.

'Terrorists' Sentenced for Fatal Attacks

Life Imprisonment for Bethlehem Attack

TA2901163495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Hebron Military Court has sentenced Rizaq Salah to life in prison for the murder of an Israeli soldier and the wounding of two others in an attack carried out two years ago.

Salah left two explosive devices near the Civil Administration building in Bethlehem. In the explosions, Gay Friedman was killed and two others wounded.

Life Plus 10 Years for 'Afula Attack

TA3001164195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Janin military court today meted out a life sentence plus 10 years in prison to terrorist Muhammad Qumayl, who had aided the terrorist who perpetrated the suicide bombing in 'Afula, in which eight people were killed and 44 were wounded.

Our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports that Qumayl was also convicted of planning several other aborted attacks, including a suicide attack near an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] bus in his native Janin.

Security Forces Arrest 13 'Radical' Activists

TA3101101595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 31 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Initiated activity against member of radical organizations in the territories is continuing. Last night, the security forces in the Janin area arrested 13 activists belonging to organizations that oppose the peace process. Among those arrested were members of the Islamic Jihad, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the arrests were carried out in the villages of Maythalun, Jaba', and Silat al-Harithiyah.

Longer Administrative Detentions Approved

TA2901191895 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 29 Jan 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Attorney General Mikha'el Ben-Ya'ir has approved the extension of administrative detentions beyond six months. However, the decision has the proviso that following a six- months detention any extension will be considered by the military commander and a military judge. Our legal affairs correspondent Mikha'el Doron reports that in making the decision the attorney general gave in to pressures exerted on him by the security forces after the Bet Lid terrorist attack. The Central Command general will sign the amendment to the administrative detention order in the next few days.

No-Confidence Vote on Sabbath Desecration Defeated

TA3001181195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Knesset has defeated the motions of no confidence in the government submitted by the United Torah Jewry, the National Religious Party, and Moledet over the Sabbath desecration during a consultation on economy at the prime minister's residence about a week ago.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that 57 coalition Knesset members [MK's] voted against the motion, while 43 MK's, including SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] members, voted against the government. The Tzomet faction abstained.

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Government Cancels Stock Market Capital Gains Tax

TA3001173195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] We open with a dramatic announcement made this evening by Finance Minister Avraham Shohat. Speaking to reporters in Jerusalem, the finance minister said the new capital gains tax on the stock market will be canceled. Shohat said he would recommend at the next cabinet meeting that the tax which he advocated now be repealed. In this interview with Amy Rhodes, Shohat explains the reasons for the move.

[Begin recording] [Shohat] I will suggest to the cabinet and the government to cancel the law of taxation of capital gains in the stock exchange. I think that the existing situation, from a political point of view and from the point of view of implementation of the law, pushed me to a decision to suggest to cancel the law.

[Rhodes] How will you make up the revenue that you believe the tax would gain?

[Shohat] We shall have to come back to the government with a suggestion how to cover the lack of about 400 million shekels. It will take a few weeks and I will do it.

[Rhodes] The capital gains tax is something you pushed for a number of months, and now you are suggesting its cancellation. Do you think the public will be able to trust you now? Do you think that you can continue as finance minister?

[Shohat] I didn't change my attitude over the law of taxation of capital gains in the market. It is not that I changed my basic position, but it was clear to me that the political situation and the fact that the implementation should take place in a few months this caused to me to make the decision. I didn't change my attitude over the law.

[Rhodes] You met with Prime minister Rabin today. Did this decision have to do with any pressure that he put on you?

[Shohat] None whatsoever; he did not press me. I just let him know about my decision an hour ago before the press conference, and he didn't press me about it.

[Rhodes] What was his reaction?

[Shohat] He said: If you decided about it, go ahead.

[Rhodes] How do you think that the stock market will react to your announcement?

[Shohat] I do not know. I do not think that the fact of putting this tax caused the situation of the stock exchange; therefore, I do not know how will be the reaction, but things will be clear, that's for sure. [end recording]

Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu said he was pleased about the death of the capital gains tax, which had depressed the stock market. But Netanyahu said the government's turnaround on the tax was another indication of its zigzag policy, which had caused it to lose credibility. [passage omitted]

This was the reaction of Histadrut Secretary General Hayim Ramon, also talking to David Ze'ev.

[Begin Ramon recording] Under the circumstances that were created since this decision, I think the decision to abolish this tax was inevitable, but I still think that tax on capital and stocks in principle is the right thing, and I hope that in the future we will find a simple way how to tax capital, including stock, in the stock exchange. For the last three months, I tried to recommend what I will define the British system on taxing stocks, and I hope that in the future—I am afraid that not in the foreseen future—that is what will be adopted in Israel as well. [end recording]

Business and economic leaders also welcomed the announcement by Shohat. Dan Propper, the president of the Manufacturers' Association, told Alan Ben-'Ami that the cancellation of the tax was inevitable. [passage omitted]

Ran Kohen, chairman of the Meretz Party faction in the Knesset, calls the cancellation a big mistake that will bury a just law for a decade. Knesset Member [MK] Kohen calls on the government to tax capital gains within the existing laws and not to continue to heap taxes on the working man.

MK Eli Dayan has called for Shohat to resign. Dayan said following the finance minister's decision no one would believe Shohat or trust economic decisions made by the government.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 30 January reports: "Prime Minister Rabin says he fully trusts and supports the finance minister. The prime minister assumed responsibility for the capital gains tax affair, saying: As one who endorsed the tax, I was a complete partner in that decision. Rabin said the decision to introduce the tax had been made in the wake of a major stock market slump about six months ago, but changes introduced in the original tax and the write-off attempts encumbered the law. Rabin added: In view of the different circumstances, it is better to correct the situation, even though earlier we endorsed a different position."]

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Israeli Forces Withdraw From Southern Areas

JN3001150495 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jordan has regained its sovereignty on territories which Israel had occupied in previous Arab-Israeli wars. Israeli forces this morning withdrew from the occupied Jordanian territories, and the Jordanian flag was hoisted above the areas from which Israel pulled out.

The Jordanian Armed Forces have taken over the areas, thereby restoring Jordan's sovereignty over them. Under the Jordan-Israel peace treaty signed last October, Israel today implemented the first phase of withdrawal from a 170 km-long area extending from the Elat crossing point on the Red Sea to the al-Ghamr region in Wadi al-'Arabah.

The second phase will begin on February 9th involving a piece of land in the north, and both phases will be completed on February 10th.

King, Mubarak on Achieving Comprehensive Peace

JN3001191595 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1845 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn this evening received a phone call from his brother His Excellency Muhammad Husni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The two leaders exchanged views on a number of issues of mutual concern. They also discussed, and coordinated views on, the means to unify the efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace in this region which is based on the resolutions of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace formula.

The two great leaders stressed the need for continued consultations and coordination between the two fraternal countries to serve the nation's causes and to preserve the interests of the people in the region.

King Husayn Addresses War College on Peace

JN3001192695 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 30 Jan 95

[Speech by King Husayn to the staff and students of the Royal War College in Amman on 30 January—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. God's peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad. Brother officers: I am pleased to meet with you today and to extend to you my warm congratulations on your good and ceaseless efforts over the decades of your honorable military service. I also commend your characteristic loyalty and sincere dedication. This has qualified you to join this cultural and military edifice and to earn your degrees that enable each of you to undertake his higher responsibilities in the areas of command, planning, organization, and training whenever duty warrants.

While doing this, you have demonstrated competence, skill, and outstanding performance. This represents our valiant Armed Forces, the Arab Army. I also congratulate all of you, including the brothers from fraternal armies, who have joined this course and who will graduate with you. We wish you and them continued success in service, command, and dedication. You enjoy noble traits and a high military code of conduct, demonstrating discipline, competence, and loyalty to the honor of service and its noble values.

Brother youths: This past year has been an eventful one. It saw many achievements on the national scene, primarily when beloved Jordan made a national and Constitutional decision to strive to achieve peace. This had followed many epics of manliness and heroism and sacrifices throughout history. Jordan has kept the trust it inherited from the free men of the Arabs and their revolutionaries who fought under the banner of the father of revolution and revolutionaries, Husayn Bin-'Ali, the descendant of Muhammad Bin-'Abdallah, may God's peace and blessings be upon him. Those revolutionaries followed the footsteps of Husayn Bin-'Ali to protect the nation and defend its beliefs. They also struggled for its freedom, unity, and progress. You, the sons of the army of the Great Arab Revolt, have inherited this banner and raised it with strong hands, protecting it with your lives, not bowing except for God almighty.

Jordan made this national decision after the Arabs had walked the path of peace. Our big sister, Egypt, was the first to follow the road to peace. Egypt, by virtue of its human and moral weight, led the nation in its successive wars. Consequently, Egypt has offered a great deal of blood and sacrifices, which no one can deny.

Afterward, we, along with other concerned Arabs, went to Madrid where we began from the same starting point from which the big sister [reference to Egypt] began in the direction of achieving a just and comprehensive peace.

We, in Jordan, had to provide a Jordanian umbrella to the Palestinian brothers in order to enable them to hold direct negotiations with the Israeli side and assume their responsibilities in conformity with their aspirations and desire since the Rabat summit held in 1974, and also based on the support of all Arabs and Muslims for the Palestinians' assumption of responsibilities toward all that concerns their direct affairs.

This resulted in negotiations and in a direct Palestinian-Israeli agreement, so this umbrella was no longer needed. We, in Jordan, have always called for peace. We went to Madrid following a national conference at which all alternatives were proposed and which chose and blessed the peace march. After lengthy and difficult negotiations,

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the Israeli Government accepted the Jordanian demand to hold negotiations in order to address all topics listed on the agenda. This agenda was adopted and approved after the Palestinian-Israeli agreement was signed in Washington and before the peace treaty was signed.

Afterward, negotiations were held, and they resulted in signing the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty which was endorsed after having passed through all constitutional phases in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. This treaty restored all Jordanian territory and water. Under the treaty, Jordan's international borders with the State of Israel were demarcated for the first time. These days, we are witnessing and living the phase of practical implementation of the articles of this treaty. In the next few days, the redeployment of both sides will be accomplished on the international borders between the two neighbors without the need for future outside observation or deployment of international or foreign troops between the two sides.

Brother officers: We stand before a new stage that has different challenges and facts. We should define our objectives and priorities at this stage. Foremost of these priorities is the modernization of our heroic Armed Forces in terms of training, organization, and equipment based on the most modern and scientific methods in the military and defensive fields and in a manner that enables them to carry out their holy duty and defend the homeland and its achievements against any danger or side that harbors evil against it, seeks to harm it, or distort its image and reputation.

Jordan, which has fought bravely and honorably, abides by its commitments, and makes peace in a brave and honorable way too. In this new stage we should carry out a comprehensive review of our good march from all its aspects in order to be able to resume the march of construction in all spheres of life in a way that ensures the continuation of development under the umbrella of security, stability, democracy, pluralism, and respect for human rights.

While we emphasize our pride in our democratic march and pluralism and our efforts to entrench its roots, we emphasize at the same time that the pluralism we speak about is the one that abides by the Constitution and National Charter in letter and spirit. It is the pluralism whose parties belong to this homeland, away from any foreign links—whether material or moral—in terms of reference or guidance. It is also the pluralism in which the minority respects the view of the majority and abides by it in demonstration of its national affiliation, and under the peace umbrella—this gift that our martyrs presented to us, and we in turn, will present to the next generations in order to achieve comprehensive progress and be a model for the brothers in the greater homeland.

We have been seeking, and are still seeking to realize comprehensive peace for this region. We believe that we have laid down a strong brick in the edifice of this peace. At the same time, we call for overcoming any difference between the sons of the one nation, unifying positions, and opening horizons of cooperation and integration among them in realization of their aspirations of unity and comprehensive renaissance, development, and free, secure, and honorable life.

Brother officers: I salute you once again as promising, faithful, and genuine Arab men. I salute you and I am proud of you and all members of our Armed Forces in all their positions while they are shouldering their responsibilities honorably and sincerely, whether in defending the homeland or through participating in the international peace-keeping forces in several parts of this world.

I thank the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the General Command of the Armed Forces for the care and attention they have given to our land, air, and naval armed forces.

I also thank those in charge of this college—administrative, training, and supervisory officials—for their continuous sacrifices, and for training and qualifying the youth to shoulder the responsibilities of the present and future.

May God protect the march and provide success. Peace and God's blessings be upon you.

Discusses Arab Ties, Other Issues

JN3001200395 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 30 Jan 95

["Dialogue" between King Husayn and the staff and students of the Royal War College in Amman on 30 January—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Name indistinct] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Staff Brigadier General [name indistinct]. Sir, his majesty the supreme commander: You have always been at the forefront of those calling for Arab solidarity, closing ranks, reviving Arab cohesion, and settling Arab differences within the Arab framework. Your royal instructions to the prime minister in the letter of designation, your majesty's visit to the Sultanate of Oman, your meeting with Egyptian president Husni Mubarak, and the foreign minister's visit to a number of Arab countries confirm this role. Sir, where do we now stand on the road toward Arab reconciliation? How does your majesty view the future of this reconciliation? Thank you, sir.

[Husayn] Thank you, sir. Thank you, son, again. Constantly and under all circumstances, we are advocates of Arab unity, reconciliation, and integration. The policies that we have adopted under all circumstances have always been much greater in terms of hopes and aspirations than the land on which we stand, although it is the heart of the Arab homeland. Those policies proceed from what we have inherited from our fathers and forefathers, in terms of their endeavor to achieve Arab awakening, independence, freedom, integration, and progress in all

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fields of life. Personally, as your brother, I lived all these years with you, and my pride has always been in my affiliation with you.

From the outset, I decided to be impersonal in dealing with any of my brothers in this Arab world. Had the repeated affronts been kept in one's heart, they would have prevented at various times the achievement of reconciliation and cooperation with many of our brothers in this Arab world, to which we belong.

Frankly, I do not believe that there is any disagreement that cannot be overcome if we take into consideration the Arab individual's present and future interest and if we place it above any other consideration. God be praised, our Arab relations with our brothers in the Arab homeland are good. We went through a difficult stage, in which we in this country suffered siege and were done a great deal of harm despite the responsibilities we shouldered and the duties we performed in defending the longest and most dangerous line of confrontation, and positions. We believe we were performing our duty. However, we were misunderstood.

We did not support Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and it is not possible for us to support using Arab weapons by Arabs against their brothers anywhere in this Arab world. However, in the event we imagined that it was our right as Arabs to tackle our problems by ourselves and attempt to find solutions to rectify everything that happened, and that we should not leave it to others in this world to solve our problems. Otherwise we would have lost the ability to act in accordance with our rights and duties toward one another and in the process of construction for the future which we wish for all of us.

I believe that this misunderstanding has been removed with time and that what we had expected and warned against did happen in terms of the material losses and the human losses before that as well as the cracks that occurred in the Arab entity in a way that definitely had a negative effect on the overall Arab stand in facing any issue. However, it is our hope that this has been removed, that the blurred vision, the anger, or the emotion that appeared regardless of their causes and justifications have been removed. God be praised, our relations with everybody are good and God willing, we will see other steps in the future.

Regarding our brothers in the Sultanate of Oman, relations have always been based on mutual respect, on joint understanding of positions, and on dialogue. God be praised, our relations with our brothers in the State of Qatar are also exemplary. It has been a joint march over many years. God be praised, conditions returned to normal with our brother in the Gulf states in general. I do not believe there are any problems. On the contrary, relations are proceeding in the right direction and God willing, we will soon find that there is no problem, the question of frank talk does not arise. There is reason to close ranks and unify them and seek integration and progress in every sense of the word.

We are in extreme pain because of the suffering of the Iraqi people and our people, given that Iraq is a strategic depth for Jordan in particular and for its brothers in the Arab world. The suffering has been long. We hope that in one way or another, the picture will change and that the Iraqi people themselves will be enabled to live a decent, free life on their own soil.

I believe that relations with the brothers in Saudi Arabia are normal and natural and God willing they will improve in the coming circumstances. I do not see any reason or justification for considering these relations deficient in terms of warmth and the desire for joint work and construction.

Our relations with Yemen are strong. Our stand during the recent crisis, which we tried to avoid in the first place, was in full harmony with the principle of safeguarding unity, particularly after it was supported and accepted by all the sons of Yemen on all levels through a general public referendum and through the election of a parliament representing everybody. When all the representatives of all factions in Yemen held a meeting in Amman there was some criticism of some leaders from here and there, however, there was no disagreement on unity. When events erupted, our support for Yemen was clear. We expected unity to be safeguarded, hoping it would be the nucleus of a strong country and unified march, in the full sense of the word, so that Yemen will enjoy an honorable life and become a good factor in this big Arab homeland.

There is no problem with our brothers in Egypt. In my view, there was no problem. I noted some of these dimensions in my speech a short while ago.

There is absolutely no problem with our brothers in Sudan or in any Arab country.

In my view, what might have a negative effect on relations every now and then is the type of life we have chosen in this country in terms of democracy, political pluralism, the National Charter which made all this possible under the Constitution, public liberties enjoyed by people, including freedom of expression and of the press. Although this might cause inconvenience on many occasions, however, we believe this is the sound path. What we have missed in the Arab world is the human being and his awareness of his value and his influence, as well as his capability to play his role in building his homeland and in achieving his aspirations, objectives, and aims.

We do not want to impose this experiment on anybody. However, we believe that it is an example and model that could be followed by our brothers in the big homeland. We always discuss all issues and the outcome will always be for our wellbeing, God willing.

I forgot about Syria. In fact, I also do not see any cause for disagreement between us and fraternal Syria. As

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regards the recent developments, we were for coordination, cooperation, openness, and frankness about all positions and under all circumstances. However, the difference between us and some of our brothers is how we view or interpret the issue of coordination. Does coordination mean that this country should become a card in the hands of others? Or is it a matter of give and take, so relations will be based on mutual respect and a desire by all parties to achieve cooperation and attain common objectives? We have been mostly in the dark regarding a great deal of what has happened.

I recall during my last meeting with brother President Hafiz al-Asad, I told him, among other things: You, perhaps, have stamina; your circumstances could allow you to go on for a longer period. However, we in Jordan cannot afford to go on any longer in light of the present realities. We started off from the same point in Madrid to attain the same objective—namely, land for peace, and to regain rights. We offered an umbrella and our Palestinian brothers, who are responsible for their own affairs, made their own choice, in line with the wishes of the Arab and Islamic nations. They chose their own way.

There was one point of disagreement. Jordan was asked to rubber-stamp the treaty then begin to negotiate. Our constant position was that we will not do that, and that we will negotiate all aspects and all issues through an initial agenda and then in detail. Once we reach a situation that we can deal and live with, then we will sign a peace treaty. And this is what happened.

What happened was the result of the change in the position of the other party and we have managed to make progress. Had we waited for all Arab-Israeli issues to be resolved...[pauses] let me be frank with you and tell you that this country is targeted more than any other Arab country. Jordan has offered a great deal—and this is its destiny—until it reached the stage we have spoken about. We do not know why the others have lagged behind as far as the other tracks are concerned. Let me be frank with you and tell you that no one cares about Jordan and that no one cares about your future and that of your children and the next generations.

It is unjust for this country, which has offered a great deal, not to adopt a position that preserves its rights and the rights of future generations. Life and death are ordained by God. We have lived for a long time. But when we are asked one day about what we have done for the people, we want to say that we have regained our lands, waters, and rights and secured a good future, God willing, for our people, and that we have provided them with a chance to work and to make efforts. We and they have been denied this throughout our life under instability and ignorance of what the future had in store.

I believe that we have sufficient capabilities, sincerity, affiliation, determination, and awareness to enable us to proceed forward and attain our objectives and goals and also to be equal with and stronger in confrontation than anyone in this part of the world or elsewhere.

This is what we have worked for and what we have achieved. As for saying that Jordan is isolated, isolation has been the case since 1990, so what has changed? We, along with a number of our brothers, were isolated. However, this is untrue. I believe that, God willing, the future holds much goodness.

God willing, our Palestinian brothers may at last have been convinced that our only objective, aspiration, and goal is for them to achieve their rights on their national soil, as they have wished. We will support them to the best of our capabilities and resources in this direction. We will also address each issue separately when it is raised, so we can remedy it.

As for the issue of Jerusalem, had Jerusalem not been mentioned in the Washington Declaration and in the treaty—I am asking any of my brothers—what would the position have been? What names would this country have been called had the Jerusalem issue been ignored? Jerusalem is in our hearts and conscience. All that was said about Jerusalem by the enemy that fought us at that time—an enemy from which we saved Jerusalem the first time—was that this country carried out its duty and role.

Until the time comes when the Jerusalem issue is discussed—discussions on it were slated for one or more years from now [sentence incomplete as heard]. For us, Jerusalem is included in Security Council Resolution 242 as an occupied territory, and it must return to its owners, God willing, through their efforts and with support from us and all others.

Regarding the holy city, which God Almighty wanted to be so important for us all, the believers in God and God's worshipers, our assessment is that if, through dialogue, we can take Jerusalem—with regard to the three religions—outside the issue of control and sovereignty by any state, and if we can raise these holy places to the level to which they should be raised, so the terms of reference will be Islamic in terms of the entire Islamic World and also with regard to our brothers in the Christian world and others, then perhaps this will be the solution which no one could find in the past.

Others may have a good word to say in this regard. I would like to remind you that all the Arabs, except for Iraq at that time and except for Pakistan in the Islamic world, supported the internationalization of Jerusalem, which was saved by this army and this people.

God willing, no one will show one-upmanship on us. God willing, we will carry out our duty perfectly and constantly. By so doing, we only seek the satisfaction of God Almighty. God is the one who grants success. I thank you, my son.

[Al-Khayrin] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Lieutenant Colonel Mubarak al-Khayrin from Qatar. Your Majesty the Supreme Commander: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of

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Qatar have been able to overcome the consequences of the Gulf War at an early stage. This was due to the will of God and to your wisdom and that of your brother His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani. Does your majesty see any role which the State of Qatar can play inside the Gulf Cooperation Council to restore Arab solidarity for the benefit of the nation and its future and to assert the nation's identity under the new world order? Thank you, Sir.

[Husayn] Sir, I have one remark to make about the new world order; I think it should be called the new world disorder. We are still on the road. We may need several years to comprehend the results of the tremor which we suffered in the world as a whole. Of course, sir, our brothers [in Qatar] have a big, and respectable and appreciated role in our Arab world and within the framework of the Arab family. We hope that that role will be constructive, and we believe it will be so, within their group as regards the brothers in the Gulf and the Gulf Cooperation Council. We take pride in our brotherly ties and we take pride in the existing links between us. This is not something new. This has always been the case in terms of brotherly ties and sincerity. Thanks to God, our relations are special and we have great hopes in our brothers and in our cooperation to arrive at our objectives and goals and to achieve the Arab integration and rebuild on the Arab level within the framework of the greater Arab homeland. Thank you, sir.

['Ajaj] Staff Brigadier General Mahmud Sadiq 'Ajaj. Your Majesty: Jordan has done all it can to support the Palestine question and to protect Jerusalem and the holy places since the dawn of the Great Arab Revolt. What the Hashemites' have done cannot be denied by anyone. Sir, you have explained so many things about the Palestine question. It is observed that the Palestinian decision has not been marked with firmness although several agreements were signed between Jordan and the Palestinian Authority. In the light of this, how does your majesty view the future of the Jordanian-Palestinian relations, taking into account that the Palestinian orientation is still ambiguous? Are there any reasons behind that?

[Husayn] I do not think there are obstacles that cannot be overcome. I think that the only obstacle was that our brothers had the feeling that we have designs and schemes that go beyond our desire to achieve cooperation and integration with our brothers and kinsfolk—and we are their brothers and the closest people to them. God willing, we have overcome the obstacles. Here I must differentiate. Our relations with our brothers in the Palestinian leadership may face certain obstacles, and they faced obstacles in the past. But this is one thing, and our duty toward our kinsfolk and brothers, who are standing fast on their soil, is another. We will continue to support them as much as we can. If the atmosphere is positive with the Palestinian leadership, they will see that for every step they make in our direction, we will make several steps.

There is much talk about confederation and future relations. I asked our brothers a few days ago to leave these subjects because unless the people get their rights on their national soil and unless they get their freedom they will not be able to deal with any new situation. When this is realized, we will be able—here and there—to think about what can we realize in the march of construction in a manner that makes this Jordanian-Palestinian relationship a model for others. Anything other than this is premature. In the first place, it conflicts with the objective concerning the various procedures or trends.

If we are moving toward unity, it is something good, God willing. We are one people and one family. One day this will be realized, God willing. However, the talk about confederation and unity is not in harmony with all the efforts, which we approve and support, toward creating the independent Palestinian entity. Why should we waste our time and theirs in discussing issues that may raise their doubts, while there is no meaning or justification. Let us leave these issues for the future, and we are confident that once again we will be one family, one hand, and one heart. As for us here in Jordan, we maintain national unity, and all have the same rights and they shoulder the same responsibilities. We protect national unity with our souls. We never allow anyone to undermine it from far or near because this may be the objective of many hostile quarters. This has been the case in the past, and it continues to be so, and will remain so in the future.

Our weapon in facing all of this is awareness, and we will continue on this path. As for the future, if any of our brothers or members of our family decides that he has the right to choose any other path, then we will wish him success. But now this national unity should not be undermined from far or near. Thank you, sir.

[Al-Farrayah] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Staff Major General 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Farrayah. Your majesty the supreme commander: As you said, one of the priorities is to consider equipping the Jordanian Armed Forces with modern and advance weapons. How far are the United States and the Western countries committed to this, and what are the priorities concerning armament in light of the peace process?

[Husayn] Regardless of the peace process, our great duty is to build, organize ourselves, and continue to make these Armed Forces capable, in terms of equipment and organization, of carrying out their duty—their honorable duty that is inherited from the fathers and forefathers, their responsibilities, which are based on the fact that they are the shield of the homeland, the protector of its hopes, freedom, and march. I believe that organization of our Armed Forces should be reconsidered. I said more than once that this does not mean any change in the number of Armed Forces. However, in terms of performance, we should reconsider the organization, and before that we should reconsider armament, because in

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recent years we have been deprived of the chance of obtaining weapons except within very narrow limits from the aid we used to receive, which enabled us to obtain some of these weapons.

Our responsibilities now are greater. There is also, among other things, the time factor. Ours are faithful, determined, and enlightened Armed Forces. In addition to all these good and human traits, our Armed Forces have the right to be in a position enabling them to acquire advanced and sophisticated weapons to deal with any eventuality or emergency.

Regarding the peace process, the responsibility is great, sir. The current issue is to remove the barriers, barbed wires, mine fields, etcetera. The new situation that will emerge when the Army is stationed in new positions in defense of this homeland will give it new responsibilities. There are many attempts by various parties to use Jordan as a crossing for raising problems and troubles and exploding the situation. In this new situation, sir, in addition to all that we have referred to, there will be no U.S., Western, or even Eastern observation teams. There will be no UN forces, or anything of this kind.

Therefore, our responsibility is not only to maintain this border, but also to prevent any harm from any party. We have also major responsibilities on the international scene. Now we have the problem concerning the biggest Jordanian gathering in the peace-keeping forces within the forces in the former Yugoslavia. Will they remain there? Will they withdraw? How will their withdrawal be secured? This is a process that even from the military point of view raises numerous dilemmas and problems.

Regarding the United States, the debts due to this country have been written off for the first year. We expect the same for the second and third years. In addition, other countries are committed to supporting us and writing off other debts. Debt, again, has been basically caused by our brothers' pledges. Approximately, the debt is equal to the promised aid that we did not receive.

Regarding armament, there is readiness to consider everything. Dialogue is currently underway to turn this into reality. We want a modern army in the full sense of the word. We want a flexible, movable army, an army that is the pride of everyone and which can enjoy everyone's absolute confidence. We will do the impossible to attain this objective. God willing, we will, soon.

[Al-'Itan] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Brigadier General Staff Muhammad Mazin al-'Itan. Your Majesty the Supreme Commander: The European bloc, in particular, and the rest of the developed world, concentrate on economy. The economic policy has become the leader of all policies. In the second part of the equation, we find that the Arab economy, despite the great wealth of some of the Arab countries, is hampered and cannot match with the international economic planning and blocs. Your majesty, how do you view the future of the Arab economy, and are there any signs of a coordinated Arab economic effort? Thank you, sir.

[Husayn] God willing, sir, God willing. If you remember, in 1980 we held a summit in Amman and discussed this issue. We also discussed this issue in every Arab meeting. Regrettably, the picture, as you said, is not the one we hope to see. We will continue our efforts, God willing, and we hope the future will bring us everything good. God willing. We have always said we hope for this.

Basically we are unified by everything. Let us look at Europe, at countries which waged wars and lost millions of people. We now see cooperation and coordination among themselves. At least, let us try to do something on the same level. We hope this will be achieved, sir, God willing.

Various Jordanian-Palestinian Accords Published

General Agreement on Cooperation

JN2901092595 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 29 Jan 95 p 8

["Text" of the General Agreement on Cooperation and Coordination between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority signed in Amman on 26 January]

[FBIS Translated Text] Based on the strong historic ties between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples to arrive at their common objectives and interests; and in confirmation of the desire of Jordan and Palestine to achieve the highest degree of cooperation and integration between them in all fields; and based on the strong bonds between the two fraternal peoples that are based on firm constants and facts which contribute in laying down solid grounds for developing these relations toward advanced stages of coordination and integration in service of the two fraternal peoples within the framework of their one future; and to further reinforce all good efforts that are made with the brothers in the Arab countries in order to realize the aspired objectives and enhance the position of our one nation and confront the challenges; and in expression of the common hopes and the supreme objectives the two sides seek to achieve, the two sides have agreed on the need to crystallize a unified strategy based on the following bases:

1. The need for full and continuous effective coordination between the two sides to achieve common objectives for the benefit and good of the two fraternal peoples.

2. The Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is special and distinguished and constitutes a model that helps to strengthen the nation's capabilities and build bridges of trust, cooperation, and understanding among its peoples to fulfill its responsibility and assume the status it deserves, especially under international developments.

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3. Jordan stresses its ceaseless support for the Palestinian people under the PLO to arrive at their right to self-determination on their national land and soil and to establish their independent state with holy Jerusalem its capital. Also, Jordan stresses its support for the Palestinian position to implement the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles since it constitutes a step on the path of realizing the Palestinian people's full national rights.

4. Jordan will cooperate with the PNA [Palestinian National Authority] in all fields and provide it with the necessary expertise to establish its national institutions so that they can assume their duties and responsibilities for the benefit of the fraternal Palestinian people.

5. Both parties stress complete compliance with the concept of peace based on the comprehensive solution which is based on international legitimacy; UN Resolutions 242, 338, and 425; and the regaining of all legitimate Arab rights.

6. Both parties will work jointly to spread the spirit of Arab reconciliation and achieve Arab solidarity for the benefit of the two fraternal peoples and the entire Arab nation. This will strengthen the chances for establishing the kind of peace that is based on justice and that can guarantee stability and development to bring good to the Arab peoples, strengthen their common affiliation, and protect the individual's rights and dignity on his land.

7. Continuous cooperation and coordination in all regional and world bodies to realize the interests of the two parties and the supreme Arab interests in all fields.

8. The agreement that was signed between Jordan and Israel on 26 October 1994 is an important step for Jordan to regain its sovereign rights to its land, waters, and borders, and to work on guaranteeing the rights of refugees and displaced people in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy. It also supports the other tracks of negotiations to arrive at all legitimate Arab rights.

9. To arrive at all aspects of coordination and consultations, and to serve the interests of the two fraternal peoples, the two sides believe that the Joint Palestinian-Jordanian Higher Committee should be activated to follow up issues of mutual concern and adopt a suitable mechanism that would guarantee the arrival at the best interests of the two people through continuous and direct contact.

10. On the path of implementing this agreement, agreements were concluded in the following fields:

a. Education.
b. Monetary and banking affairs.
c. Commercial affairs.
d. Post and telecommunications.
e. Transportation.
f. Administrative affairs.

11. It was agreed to discuss cooperation and coordination in other fields and affairs when the need arises.

Signed in Amman on 26 January 1995, corresponding to 25 Sha'ban 1415 hegira.

For the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Prime Minister Zayd Bin- Shakir

For the PNA: PNA Chairman Yasir 'Arafat

Administrative Affairs Agreement

JN2901123095 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 29 Jan 95 p 23

["Text" of the Administrative Affairs Agreement between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority signed in Amman on 26 January]

[FBIS Translated Text] In implementation of the General Agreement for Cooperation and Coordination between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA [Palestinian National Authority] signed in Amman on 26 January 1995, the two sides have agreed on the following:

Article One:

The necessary practical steps will be taken to reinforce cooperation in administrative affairs and to embark on the exchange of expertise, as well as to work earnestly in the fields of security cooperation between them in the interest of both parties and the two fraternal peoples.

Article Two:

A. The two sides will work toward keeping the bridges open continuously for the people. In this stage, the two sides will try to open the bridges at least 16 hours a day.

B. The two sides will facilitate the crossing of trucks and buses in accordance with an agreement to be ratified for this purpose.

Article Three:

The Jordanian side will issue special regulations for ratifying the documents which will be issued by the PNA in accordance with arrangements that will safeguard citizens' rights.

Article Four:

A joint committee will be formed from the competent ministers to implement this agreement and endorse the detailed executive procedures.

Signed in Amman on 26 January 1995, corresponding to 25 Sha'ban 1415 hegira.

For the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Interior Minister Salamah Hammad

For the PNA, Jamil al-Tarifi, minister of liaison and civil coordination.

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Trade Agreement

JN2901090995 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 29 Jan 95 p 3

["Text" of the Trade Agreement between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA signed in Amman on 26 January]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman (J.T.) In implementation of the General Agreement signed by the Jordanian government and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) on Jan. 26, 1995, the two sides agree on the following.

Article one:

A) In reaffirmation of their commitment towards working within the principle of free trade to ensure the flow of goods and services between them, including agricultural products, and with a view to achieving that goal, national goods will be exempt from customs duty and all other fees and taxes when they are exchanged between the two parties, with the exception of the sales tax which is imposed in Jordan and the value added tax imposed by the Palestine National Authority.

B) To achieve that goal the two sides will meet every six months to agree on lists of goods to be exchanged between them under paragraph (A), with a view to increasing the number of items in this category gradually until complete liberalisation of trade between the two sides is achieved.

C) The two sides will facilitate the exchange of national commodities and services without exception, to include all commodities in paragraph (B), on condition that they be subjected to taxes still levied on them by either side.

Article two:

The two sides will set up a joint ministerial committee to follow up the implementation of the agreement and endorse detailed measures to be applied in matters concerning trade and customs tariffs for the purpose of facilitating the goods and services to and from either side. The services will include expertise and required cadres involved. The committee is to meet at least once every three months or whenever the need arises.

Article three:

Upon the signing of this agreement the two sides will form teams of experts to study the procedures that will enable the various articles to be implemented, taking care not to impinge on the rules in force by Jordan and the PNA. The experts will submit a report on their work to the joint committee for endorsement.

Article four:

In view of the importance of transit trade to the two sides, the parties agree on the necessary procedures to facilitate and organise transit trade by land, sea and air, in accordance with a transit agreement that will be reached between them.

The two sides will give due importance and urgency to the matter of reconstructing bridges on the Jordan River between the West Bank and Jordan to facilitate transit trade.

Article five:

With regard to agricultural products:

A) The committees formed by the two sides will work out a timetable for the exchange of these products.

B) The Jordanian government will facilitate the export of Palestinian agricultural products through Jordanian territory under the transit deal.

Article six:

The two sides will start conducting economic, technical and legal studies and organise the joint free zone in the Jordan Valley for the purpose of storing and marketing different products produced or manufactured by either side.

Article seven:

The two sides agree to secure part or all the requirements of oil products needed by the Palestinian side under a bilateral protocol to be organised by the PNA and the Jordanian Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company.

Article eight:

The two sides agree to secure part of or all the requirements of cement and iron used in construction needed by the Palestinians in accordance with arrangements to be agreed on by Jordan and the PNA.

Article nine:

The two sides agree to begin a study on linking the power grids of the two sides.

Article ten:

This agreement is to be applied on trade exchanges between Jordan and the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Article eleven:

Upon endorsement by both sides, this agreement will go into effect immediately.

The agreement was signed by Minister of Industry and Trade 'Ali Abu-al-Raghib for Jordan and PNA Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Ahmad Quray'.

Monetary, Banking Agreement

JN2901131295 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 29 Jan 95 p 22

["Text" of Monetary and Banking Cooperation Agreement between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA signed in Amman on 26 January]

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[FBIS Translated Text] In implementation of the provisions of the General Agreement for Cooperation and Coordination between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA, signed in Amman on 26 January 1995, the two sides have agreed on the following:

Article One:

In the monetary field:

1. The Jordanian dinar will remain the currency in use in addition to the other currencies in circulation in the PNA areas.

Being so, it will be a legal means for payment for all purposes and official dealings and will be accepted by the PNA and its various institutions, as well as banks.

2. The two sides agree to commit themselves to entering into comprehensive and early negotiations aimed at organizing the process of exchanging Jordanian dinars in the PNA areas for local Palestinian currency. They also commit themselves to making arrangements and any other obligations required in this respect should the PNA decide to take such a measure.

The two sides also pledge to refrain from taking any abrupt unilateral measures concerning monetary affairs under any circumstances that could adversely affect monetary stability in either of the two sisterly countries or their mutual economic security.

3. The Palestinian side undertakes to make all local payments in Jordanian dinars as much as possible until the new Palestinian currency has been issued.

Article Two:

In the banking field:

First: The licensing of banks in PNA areas:

1. The competent Palestinian authorities will issue licenses to banks operating in the PNA areas. This covers Jordanian banks opening new branches or offices in Palestinian territories.

2. The Jordanian and the Palestinian sides will offer the required facilities, in accordance with the valid legislations in both countries and based on preferential treatment, in order to open branches or offices for Jordanian or Palestinian banks in either country if these banks have their head office in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan or in the Palestinian territory.

3. Licenses that are actually granted by the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] to open branches and offices of Jordanian banks in West Bank areas that will later be annexed to the PNA areas will remain valid. This is provided that these branches and offices be subject to any general banking legislation or regulations issued by the PNA in the future.

The two sides will coordinate the licensing of new branches of Jordanian banks that were not licensed before the signing of this agreement until the PNA takes charge of licensing authorities in the West Bank.

Second: Monitoring and supervising banks:

1. The Basel Agreement will serve as a reference in matters related to the process of coordinating control over banks and the distribution of monitoring responsibilities between the mother monetary authority and the host monetary authority. In accordance with this agreement, the Palestinian Monetary Authority and the CBJ agree to lay down the bases, regulations, and special mechanism for monitoring and supervising branches and offices of Jordanian banks operating in the Palestinian areas to secure the safety and liquidity of these banks and to ensure that their work is in line with the monetary requirements in both countries.

2. The Palestinian Monetary Authority and the CBJ will exchange all necessary information and data on the activities of branches and offices of Jordanian banks operating in the Palestinian areas. This also includes exchanging statistics and information dealing with current deposits and loans in Jordanian dinars that belong to non- Jordanian banks operating in Palestinian areas. Moreover, the CBJ will provide the Palestinian Monetary Authority with information or statistics which deal with the activities of branches and offices of licensed Palestinian banks which are operating or will operate in Jordanian territories, as well as of Jordanian banks operating in the West Bank.

3. The CBJ will offer the necessary expertise and services to the Palestinian side in order to complete the establishment of a Palestinian Monetary Authority and of trained banking institutions and cadres based on the request of the competent Palestinian authorities and within the capabilities of the CBJ and the banking training institutions operating in the kingdom.

4. The Jordanian side will make available the necessary reserve liquidity in Jordanian dinars for Jordanian banks operating in the PNA area in accordance with the rules to be set by the joint committee. In emergency circumstances, the two sides will hold immediate discussions in accordance with a policy laid down by the joint committee.

5. The Jordanian and Palestinian sides will facilitate the flow of the Jordanian currency, without placing any obstacles, as long as the Jordanian currency is accepted as a currency for circulation.

6. The two sides will hold immediate consultations to review any emergency monetary problems related to circulating the Jordanian dinar in the PNA areas.

Signed in Amman on 26 January 1995, corresponding to 25 Sha'ban 1415 hegira.

For the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: CBJ Governor Dr. Muhammad Sa'id al-Nabulsi

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For the PNA: Finance Minister Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi

Cultural, Information Agreement

JN2901124095 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 29 Jan 95 p 22

["Text" of Cultural and Information Cooperation Agreement between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA signed in Amman on 26 January]

[FBIS Translated Text] In implementation of the provisions of the General Agreement on Cooperation and Coordination between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA, signed in Amman on 26 January 1995, the two sides agreed on the following:

1. To consolidate cultural and information cooperation between the two fraternal states, and form a joint committee of the competent ministers for this purpose to implement what the two sides agree on in the fields of culture and information and in a manner that serves the higher national interests of the two peoples and realizes the noble objectives they seek.

2. To encourage joint cultural and information activities and exchange intellectual and cultural delegations, exchange artistic teams and exhibitions, and exchange publications published in the two countries which will bolster the one cultural objective of Jordan and Palestine.

3. To activate the exchange in the fields of radio and television, and the exchange of news, seminars, and programs that have cultural and information nature.

4. In emphasis of the pan-Arab mission Jordan carried out toward the Palestinian people represented in supporting their long struggle to reach their objectives, Jordan will continue to support the PNA cultural and information establishments and assist them to complete the infrastructure in the fields of visual and audio media.

5. To facilitate the movement of publications and cultural and information materials necessary for various cultural fairs and activities between the two countries.

6. To coordinate and cooperate between Jordanian and Palestinian delegations in all Arab and international conferences and meetings.

7. Joint technical committees will translate these trends into detailed programs in various information and cultural fields.

Singed in Amman on 26 January 1995, corresponding to 25 Sha'ban 1415 hegira.

For the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Minister of Culture Samir al-Habashinah

For the PNA: Minister of Culture Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh

Education Agreement

JN2901164295 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 29 Jan 95 p 22

["Text" of the Education and Higher Education Agreement between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA signed in Amman on 26 January]

[FBIS Translated Text] In implementation of the General Agreement for Cooperation and Coordination between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA, signed in Amman on 26 January 1995, the two sides have agreed on the following:

Article One:

The two contracting sides will work on developing and strengthening cooperation between them in all educational fields. They will also work on exchanging information and the results of expertise and improvements in the said fields.

Article Two:

a. The Jordanian curricula and text books will continue to be used in the West Bank for the period required by the Palestinian side without any change or amendment to these books and curricula.
b. The PNA can publish extra printed material in various school subjects to highlight the Palestinian identity.
c. The PNA will seek to take advantage of the Jordanian experience to prepare the Palestinian curricula and text books in terms of philosophy, objectives, and the general topics.

Article Three: The two parties will exchange views and expertise in the fields of educational techniques, school buildings, vocational education, training, and other educational fields.

Article Four: The Jordanian party will allow the Palestinian educational officials the opportunity to take advantage of the Jordanian experience in the various educational fields and to participate in seminars, courses, workshops, and educational conferences that convene in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Article Five:

a. The Jordanian Education Ministry will recognize the Palestinian General Secondary Education certificate and consider it equal to the Jordanian General Secondary Education Certificate.
b. The Ministry of Higher Education will recognize the Comprehensive Diploma Certificate granted by the Palestinian community colleges and consider it equal to the Jordanian Comprehensive Diploma Certificate.
c. The school certificates for all school stages will be recognized according to the system of recognizing the certificates applicable in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the purposes of transfer and acceptance.

Article Six: The Jordanian side will facilitate the acceptance of Palestinian students in Jordanian government

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universities and in the community colleges, particularly in the fields for which there is no equivalent in the Palestinian universities, in accordance with the acceptance standards approved by the Jordanian Higher Education Council. The Palestinian side will nominate students in the various fields according to these standards.

Article Seven: The two sides will exchange expertise, legislations, researches, studies, and the publications issued by the two parties in accordance with the customary norms.

Article Eight: A joint committee of the specialized ministers shall be set up to follow up the implementation of what has been agreed upon and to discuss any developments in the educational fields.

This agreement was signed in Amman on 26 January 199, corresponding to 25 Sha'ban 1415 hegira.

[signed] 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Rawabidah, deputy prime minister and minister of education, for Jordan; and Yasir 'Amr, minister of education and higher education, for the PNA

Post, Telecommunications Agreement

JN2901130595 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 29 Jan 95 p 23

["Text" of the Post and Telecommunications Cooperation Agreement between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA signed in Amman on 26 January]

[FBIS Translated Text] In implementation of the General Agreement for Cooperation and Coordination between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA, signed in Amman on 26 January 1995, the two sides have agreed on the following:

Article One:

The Jordanian side will supply the Palestinian side with the instruction and training curricula used at post and telecommunications training colleges and institutes. Likewise, it will provide training to Palestinian students and trainees at these facilities. Moreover, the Jordanian side will send Jordanian experts to the territories under the PNA control to help modernize post and telecommunications facilities there.

Article Two:

The Palestinian side will grant Jordanian firms, engineers, and technicians priority whenever possible so they may take part in the implementation of studies, the drafting of plans, the conducting of evaluation reports, and know-how transfer within the context of the projects implemented in the autonomous Palestinian areas and international aid projects. Coordination in this regard will be conducted by the competent authorities of the two sides.

Article Three:

The Jordanian side will mobilize its capabilities and international relations to support the Palestinian side in its efforts to join the Universal Postal Union, the International Telecommunications Union, and similar Arab organizations.

Article Four:

A joint postal and telecommunications committee comprising the competent ministers shall be formed to follow up on the implementation of this agreement.

Article Five:

The issue of exchanging direct telephone services and all related communications services shall be discussed when the appropriate circumstances for this are available to the Palestinian side.

Article Six:

The two sides have agreed to exchange postal services in accordance with the attached protocol.

Signed in Amman on 26 January 1995, corresponding to 25 Sha'ban 1415 hegira.

For the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Post and Telecommunications Minister Jamal al-Sarayirah

For the PNA: Post and Telecommunications Minister Dr. 'Abd-al- Hafiz al-Ashhab

Protocol on Mail Cooperation

JN2901181095 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 29 Jan 95 pp 22, 23

["Text" of protocol of cooperation in the field of exchanging mail services between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PNA signed in Amman on 26 January]

[FBIS Translated Text] In implementation of Article 6 of the General Agreement between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority [PNA], the two sides have agreed on the following:

Article I

Direct exchange of mail between the two countries.

A. The Amman Central Post Office shall serve as the Jordanian exchange office while the Jericho Post Office shall be the Palestinian exchange office.

B. Mail exchange between the two sides shall take place on the King Husayn Bridge between two vehicles sent by the two services or in the way each service deems appropriate for it. Each side shall pay the expenses of transporting mail until it reaches the territory of the other side.

C. The principle of mutual exemption of final expenses shall apply to all kinds of mail, the expenses of domestic air transportation if used, the incoming shares of all

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kinds of packages, compensation for imbalance in the urgent mail, and compensation shares of the electronic mail (facsimile) when applied.

D. The PNA's incoming and outgoing mail shall, at present, be confined to the Gaza Strip and Jericho. The service will extend in the future to other regions that are announced by the PNA.

E. Each side shall return the empty mail bags of the other side in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the international agreement.

Article II

The exchange of mail between the PNA and other Arab countries through the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan:

A. Outgoing mail:

—The Palestinian postal service shall deliver the mail bags that are sent to Arab countries to the Jordanian postal service on the King Husayn Bridge.

—The Jordanian postal service shall transport the Palestinian mail bags from the King Husayn Bridge to Queen Alia International Airport where they will be handled by Royal Jordanian [RJ].

—The Palestinian postal administration shall pay for transporting the mail bags that are sent to the Arab countries for the distance stated above. This shall be in accordance with the rate set in the International Postal Agreement for each kg for the first 100 km. The Palestinian postal administration shall pay to the Jordanian postal administration in Jordanian currency in accordance with the rate adopted by the IMF for the Jordanian dinar against the Special Drawing Rights [SDR] unit for the periods, and in accordance with the guidelines, stated in the international agreement in force.

—The Palestinian postal service shall bear the cost of the air transportation of the Palestinian mail from the Queen Alia International Airport to the Arab countries at the same rates it applies on the Jordanian postal service and in accordance with the terms applied by the valid international agreement.

—The financial claims will be submitted in accordance with the world's postal union currency, SDR units, directly from RJ to the PNA and the settlements of the claims will be done directly between them.

—The Palestinian mail exchange office will prepare tables for the transfer of the Palestinian mail, (IV7) [expansion unknown], to all centers requested by the PNA. The Jordanian mail exchange office will fix the flight numbers in accordance with the list provided by RJ.

—RJ will return the PNA's empty bags from the Arab countries that handled outgoing mail and which handed the bags to the Jordanian service which in turn will hand them over to the PNA free of charge.

B. Incoming Mail.

—Countries sending mail will bear the cost of air transportation to Queen Alia International Airport as usual.

—The Jordanian postal service will carry the mail from Queen Alia International Airport to the bridge at the expense of the sender country in accordance with the rates fixed by the Jordanian postal service and based on the valid regulations of the international agreement.

Article III.

The PNA will contact the Arab countries and agree with them on mail exchange in the manner it sees fit.

Article IV.

The three parties concerned will adopt the necessary security measures to guarantee the safety of the incoming and outgoing mail provided this does not contravene the provisions of the international Agreement.

Article V.

Valid international postal regulations and documents will be applied to everything that is not stated above.

Article VI.

The parties concerned will agree on an implementation date at a convenient time and as soon as the necessary measures pertaining to this are completed.

Signed in Amman on 26 January 1995, corresponding to 25 Sha'ban, 1415 of the Hegira.

For the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Jamal al-Sarayirah, Minister of post and communications

For the PNA, Dr. 'Abd-al-Hafiz al-Ashhab, minister of post and communications.

Indian Medicines Enroute to Iraq Via Amman

JN2901084695 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 29 Jan 95 p 2, 7

["Special to the JORDAN TIMES" by Cathy King]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—The first of five shipments of emergency medical supplies from India will be dispatched to Iraq today from Amman, India Humanitarian Initiative (IHI) Chairman and Member of Parliament John Joseph said Sunday.

The first consignment consisting of about 26 metric tonnes—three truck loads—of "life-saving medicines" was due to arrive on a Royal Jordanian flight from Bombay Sunday evening. Trucks arranged by Iraq would

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carry the cargo by road to Baghdad, said Mr. Joseph, who is also a member of the National Commission for Minorities in India.

Member of Parliament Shaykh Muhammad Lal Jan Basha and journalist George Varghese, both members of IHI, will accompany Mr. Joseph and the cargo of 15 types of medicine donated by 25 pharmaceutical companies to Baghdad.

The medicine will be handed over to the Iraqi Ministry of Health for distribution, Mr. Varghese told the JORDAN TIMES.

The majority of the supplies are medicines for children, those used for anesthesia and even threads for stitching after surgery. These items were identified as priorities during an Indian government delegation [visit] to Iraq last April, Mr. Varghese said.

Shaykh Muhammad, Mr. Joseph and Mr. Varghese were among the delegation sent as emissaries of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to secure the release of a young Indian from an Iraqi jail at the time, they said.

"The sufferings of the people moved us," Mr. Varghese said, adding that Shaykh Muhammad, during his visits to mosques in Baghdad, was approached by many pleading for assistance.

Mr. Joseph said that on return to India the delegation reported the "grave and pathetic" situation there to the prime minister.

Upon the request of Mr. Rao, the 51-strong IHI began collecting donations of medical relief, Mr. Joseph added. IHI is comprised of parliament members and officials.

The Indian team said more than 400,000 Iraqis were suffering from diseases related to malnutrition and a "large number of deaths" reported daily are due to a lack of medicines and food.

The three member team will be joined shortly by Members of Parliament G.M.C. Balayogi, another IHI representative who was also among last year's delegation.

The initiative took six months to set up, during which time operations ceased temporarily because of a plague that swept some parts of India in the summer, Mr. Joseph said.

Following the resumption of arrangements, a further three months were dedicated to collecting medical supplies, he added.

Objections raised by the United States and Britain led the U.N. Security Council sanctions committee to disallow many items that the Iraqis need, Mr. Joseph said. These included bedding for hospitals, tyres and spare parts, soap, blankets, pesticides, electric lights, fishing nets, paints, nails and cooking utensils.

Permission, however, has been granted by the U.N. and the Jordanian government to transport the Indian collected medical relief via Amman to Iraq, Mr. Joseph said. A recent visit to Iraq by a British Red Cross delegation also expressed concern over the increasing number of deaths attributed to malnutrition and a lack of medicines, he said, adding that this organisation was also arranging medicines to be taken to Iraq.

Mr. Joseph said the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) reported that many hospitals in Iraq were likely to be closed because of the lack of medicines and medical equipment.

Shaykh Muhammad, Mr. Joseph and Mr. Varghese will return from Iraq next Friday or Saturday to meet a further four plane loads of medicine expected to arrive within the next two weeks.

The cost of transportation by Royal Jordanian from India to Amman has been met by donations, Mr. Joseph said. He declined to discuss the total cash of the relief supplies.

"There is no political motive...the medicines will be presented to the Iraqi authorities as a humanitarian gesture and a token of goodwill from the people of India." Mr. Joseph said.

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Israeli Shelling, Resistance Operations Reported

NC2701191195 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 27 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tension prevailed in the south this afternoon following resistance operations and Israeli shelling.

The outskirts of Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah came under intermittent Israeli artillery bombardment from positions in al-Zaffatah and the al-Litani River basin. The shelling spread to include Frun and al-Ghanduriyah. Meanwhile, Israeli helicopters flew over these areas and opened fire from heavy machine guns on the hills near the above-named villages.

Security sources said that a resistance group attacked the 'Alman and al-Shumariyah positions with rockets this afternoon.

The Amal Movement's operations room in the south issued a statement confirming that one of its group detonated a device near a Lahd [South Lebanese Army] patrol on the Dayr Siryan road inside the occupied security strip. The statement added that the patrol suffered human losses in the attack.

The Israeli artillery shelled al-Jabal al-Rafi' in Iqlim al-Tuffah and the outskirts of 'Ayta al-Jabal, Bra'shit, and Sribbin this morning.

Israeli, SLA Activities in South Reported

NC2801131395 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to information from security sources, the Israeli forces today continued to reinforce their positions in the border strip, deploying new artillery batteries in various positions. The information says more troops were sent to the Israeli posts in the region, especially in the al-Qawzah-Bayt Lif triangle. About 12 military vehicles were seen moving along al-Khardali-al-'Ayshiayh road.

Amal Movement sources said this morning that Israeli concentrations of personnel and equipment were seen in the Israeli positions in the border strip, especially in al-Qantarah, al- 'Ayshiyah, Tallusah, and al-Rayhan. The sources said young men between 18 and 25 years of age are being forcefully impressed in the towns of 'Aramta and al-Rayhan.

Islamic Resistance sources say the Israeli forces and the South Lebanese Army [SLA] began forcing citizens to transport ammunition to Israeli positions in their private cars, and that they killed citizen Muhammad 'Abd Turmus, from Tallusah, because he refused to transport ammunition to an SLA position.

This morning, the Israeli forces shelled the periphery of Yatar and raked the area around al-Suwayda' post with machine- gun fire.

Nasrallah: Anti-Israel Operations To Continue

NC2901204195 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated text] Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah has stressed that operations against the Israeli forces will continue. He said that the time when Israel used to attack us without encountering resistance is over once and for all. Speaking at a memorial service at Beirut's southern suburb, he noted that three years after the Madrid Conference we see that the disfigured offspring of that conference—the Gaza-Jericho agreement—is in its death throes. He asked what is Rabin to the Jews now and what is 'Arafat to the Palestinians? He said: We are currently seeing what looks like mourning for the death of this agreement.

'Resistance' Detonates Explosive Device Under Lahd Patrol

NC3001095895 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Security sources note that resistance men this morning detonated an explosive device under a Lahdist patrol on the Bayt Yahun road. Israeli and Lahd Forces' artillery then shelled the areas around Haddatha, firing four 81-mm mortar rockets.

Hizballah Claims Attack on SLA Position

NC3001215995 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2115 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The areas of al-Jabal al-Rafi' and Jisr Habbush were subjected to Israeli shellfire this evening. Elsewhere, Hizballah claimed responsibility for an attack on a Lahdist [South Lebanese Army, SLA] position near Bayt Yahun today. Hizballah said that the attack left many troops either dead or wounded.

'Zionist' Sabotage Networks Uncovered in Beirut

NC3001191095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 30 Jan 95

[Report by Muhammad Bishkar in Beirut]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. It was disclosed today that in the past two weeks Lebanese security forces have arrested members of sabotage networks in the southern suburb of Beirut. These networks, which are connected with Zionist intelligence services, aimed to cause confusion, undermine stability, gather information on the Hizballah leadership, and penetrate it.

High-level Lebanese sources have stressed that the Lebanese Army Command intelligence services have cooperated with the intelligence services of the Syrian forces operating in Lebanon and the Hizballah services. The arrested persons confessed to links with the Zionist intelligence services and forming networks for sabotage, information gathering, and to organize assassinations. They also admitted that Israeli officers are directing these networks from Cyprus and southern Lebanon.

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Thus, the number of Zionist networks uncovered since the explosion in the southern suburb of Beirut last month has risen. Four persons were martyred in that explosion. Hizballah held a ceremony yesterday on the occasion of the 40th day since their martyrdom. Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah vowed that the time when Lebanese people were killed and the enemy got away with it has gone forever and that the current era is the era of martyrs. [passage omitted]

UN Security Council Extends UNIFIL Mandate 6 Months

NC3001214395 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2115 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The UN Security Council today extended the mandate of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] for another six months.

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Writer: Netanya, al-Shaqaqi Fuel Tension With U.S.

MM3101115595 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 28 Jan 95 p 5

[Article by Ibrahim Humaydi: "What Would al-Shaqaqi's Departure From Damascus Mean?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The suicide operation carried out by two Islamic Jihad elements against a military target in Netanya represented a factor contributing to "tension" in Syrian-U.S. relations—the most important factor for years, compared to the course of these relations since Syria engaged in the peace negotiations with Israel.

The U.S. position is based on three matters revolving entirely around Damascus' way of handling the "Jihad" attack on Israeli military elements. They are: The Palestinian organization's announcement from Damascus of its responsibility for the operation, The Syrian media's description of the attack as "martyrdom," and the support for the operation announced by al-Quds radio, which belongs to the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, led by Ahmad Jibril. Then comes the U.S. request which U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher conveyed to his Syrian opposite number, Faruq al-Shar', namely to move Jihad leader Fathi al-Shaqaqi out of Damascus. Because the U.S. Administration cannot "understand" why he is in Damascus while Syria continues to engage in the peace negotiations with Israel.

The striking thing is Washington's disregard for a fundamental point which sums up the two countries' views of the Palestinian movements' actions and tasks. Damascus believes that it made an "achievement" when President Clinton moved closer to its position during his recent visit to the Syrian capital. He stressed that achieving peace in the region would end the "terrorist operations" carried out by several organizations. Besides, entering the negotiations does not mean using all the cards at once while the other side continues to cling to its "more violent" negotiating cards, whether the strategic ones such as nuclear weapons or the tactical ones such as the continued strikes on southern Lebanon.

Al-Shaqaqi's departure from Damascus would not mean that the file has been closed forever. On the contrary, the Islamic Jihad leader's presence in the Syrian capital—after his expulsion from Gaza by Rabin himself—consolidates the movement's policy, which differs from those of the other organizations, including Hamas. Because its policy is to hit specific Israeli military targets only, not to attack civilians, and to restrict operations to Palestinian territories and the military front only, and not to launch military strikes or carry out any assassinations or bombings against Jews or Westerners abroad. This falls in the framework of al-Shaqaqi's warning that his departure from Damascus to Tehran or Khartoum "would not be useful" for the U.S. Administration, because the "Jihad retaliation" to any Israeli measures or any position on the peace negotiations might "not be controlled" by a certain policy, hence returning us to the years of abduction and suicide operations abroad.

Thus the "sensitivity" between Damascus and Washington; the former's endeavor to "reduce the severity of the latter's bias" toward Israel to its lowest levels, as long as it is not possible to turn it into "a friend to which it is bound by interests"; and Syria's issuing of no "condemnation" of the Netanya operation, in accordance with the official position adopted by Syria toward the "resistance," as has happened on several occasions before—all this caused the Syrian Government to formulate its declared position in an eloquent diplomatic manner. The official Syrian reply to Christopher's request was announced through al-Shar', who stressed that "Israel's evasion of the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace creates a natural climate for the continuation of the resistance operations and the escalation of the tragic cycle of violence." This statement replaced a statement transmitted by Damascus radio, citing a statement issued by the Council of Ministers, namely that "Israel's evasion of the achievement of peace is a big motive for the continuation of resistance operations and the intifadah against Israeli forces."

With regard to the U.S. side, the Netanya attack led to the freezing of the assets of Palestinian organizations, including Islamic Jihad and figures like al-Shaqaqi and 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Awdah, a Jihad founder. But the measures appears to be more political than practical, because the leaders of these organizations and personalities have stressed that they have no financial assets in the United States. It is not reasonable that these are going to open accounts for their organizations in their names.

The most important thing is that Syria has stressed that Israel is responsible for the cycle of "violence" in the region. Because it is not moving seriously toward a peace that guarantees before anything the restoration of "Arab rights" capable of easing the severity of Arab rejection, Islamic or leftist. So the Netanya operation, which has frozen the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations for some time, has on the one hand confirmed the Syrian view that no "unjust peace would last, nor would it bring about stability in the region." And the operation has postponed Ambassador Walid al-Mu'allim's departure to hold talks and exchange views with his Israeli opposite number, Itamar Rabinovich, on the other. This is in the knowledge that Syria is always keen to continue the contacts to prompt the U.S. broker to continue his efforts, without being very concerned with the results of the Israeli elections, in conformity with the official Syrian position. Al-Shar' told the Council of Ministers that the Labor Party adopts the same position with Likud as regards "imposing domination over Arab territories." That is, the current government has not so far offered anything that encourages Damascus to work speedily to reach an agreement with it before the elections.

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Jordanian Opposition Leaders Delegation Visits

Delegation Arrives in Damascus

JN2401175795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 24 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A delegation representing the leaders of Jordanian opposition parties arrived in Damascus this evening at the invitation of the National Progressive Front [NPF] Central Command.

The delegation was received at Damascus International Airport by Kamil 'Attari, member of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party National Command and head of the Organization Bureau; Safwan Qudsi, secretary general of the Arab Socialist Union and member of the NPF Central Command; Sayf-al-Din Fattum, secretary of the Foreign Relations Bureau at the Ba'th Party National Command; and 'Abd-al-Ilah 'Asi, the NPF secretary.

The Jordanian opposition delegation includes Fu'ad Dabbur and Mahmud al-Bustanji, from the Progressive Arab Ba'th Party; 'Azmi al- Khawaja, from the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party; Taysir al-Zibri, from the Jordanian People's Democratic Party-Hashd; 'Ali 'Amir and Muhammad Habbub, from the Jordanian Democratic Progressive Party; Milhim al-Tall and Dr. Shahir al-Rawashdah, from the Constitutional Jordanian Arab Front Party; 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Majali and Dr. 'Arafat al-Ashhab, from the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party; and Dr. Ya'qub Zayadin and Faraj al-Tumayzi, from the Jordanian Communist Party.

This visit by envoys of the Jordanian opposition parties to Damascus is aimed at holding consultations with the NPF parties in Syria on the Arab situation and its developments, as well as the challenges facing the Arab nation. The visit is also aimed at expressing the Jordanian parties' support for the Syrian Arab position, which is committed to the objective of liberating the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and the regaining of Arab rights, and which rejects any relinquishment of these rights.

The visit further aims at strengthening the ties of cooperation between the fraternal parties and forces in Syria and Jordan to support the critical pan-Arab cohesion and face Israel's schemes, which seek to deal separately with the Arab countries, fragment Arab ranks, and impose hegemony over the Arab region.

Khaddam, al-Ahmar Meet Delegation

JN2501154695 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 25 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus—Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received at 1230 today a delegation from the following Jordanian opposition parties: The Progressive Arab Ba'th Party, the Jordanian Democratic Progressive Party, the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, the Jordanian People's Democratic Party-Hashd, the Constitutional Jordanian Arab Front Party, the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party, and the Jordanian Communist Party.

Discussions during the meeting revolved around the Arab situation, current developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the stages covered by the peace process.

The vice president presented Syria's position on various Arab issues, including the peace process and Syria's peace directives, which are based on international legitimacy and the need for an Israeli withdrawal to the borderlines of 4 June 1967.

Members of the Jordanian party delegation voiced support for Syria's position, policy, and steadfastness. They stressed that Syria is protecting the Arab nation's interests and dignity.

Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, this morning received the delegation of the Jordanian opposition parties which is visiting Syria at the invitation of the National Progressive Front. He welcomed the leaders of the Jordanian parties in their country, Syria.

The party leaders stressed that they were visiting Syria to express their support and backing for the firm and principled Syrian Arab position on the peace process under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad. They said this position represents the aspirations of the Arab masses in the various Arab countries. They further said that the visit also aims at exchanging views and holding consultations with the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the parties affiliated with the National Progressive Front on the current Arab conditions and what should be done by organizations and countries to face the challenges of the hostile forces, particularly the Israeli schemes in the region.

Mashariqah Meets Delegation

JN2601150295 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 26 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, vice president and vice chairman of the National Progressive Front [NPF], received at 1100 today a delegation from a number of Jordanian opposition parties. The meeting was attended by 'Abd-al- Ghani Qannut, secretary general of the Arab Socialists Movement; al- Sayyid Isma'il, secretary general of the Socialist Unionists Party; Safwan Qudsi, secretary general of the Arab Socialist Union Party; Ahmad al-As'ad, secretary general of the Democratic Socialist Unionist Party; and Daniel Ni'mah, member of the Political Bureau of the Syrian Communist Party.

The delegation of Jordanian opposition parties is comprised of Fu'ad Dabbur and Mahmud al-Bustanji from the Progressive Arab Ba'th Party; 'Azmi al-Khawaja from the Democratic Popular Unity Party; Taysir al-Zibri from the Democratic People's Party-Hashd; 'Ali

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'Amir and Muhammad Habbub from the Democratic Progressive Party; Milhim al-Tall and Dr. Shahir al-Rawashidah from the Constitutional Jordanian Arab Front Party; 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Majali and Dr. 'Arafat al-Ashhab from the Socialist Democratic Party; and Dr. Ya'qub Zayadin and Faraj al-Tumayzi from the Communist Party.

Briefing the delegation on Syria's political course under President Hafiz al-Asad, Dr. Mashariqah said that Syria seeks a just, comprehensive peace based on the resolutions of international legitimacy. He underlined Syria's policy of working to achieve effective Arab solidarity and inciting the pan-Arab will to confront all dangers posed to the Arab nation.

Referring to partial and separate settlements, Dr. Mashariqah said that they obstruct the peace process and hamper the achievement a just, comprehensive, and durable peace. Speaking about the NPF, Dr. Mashariqah said that it is one of the most important achievements brought about by the Corrective Movement, noting that it reflects party and political pluralism and constitutes one of the basic pillars in the life of the country.

The delegation of Jordanian opposition parties expressed appreciation for Syria's policy and active and effective role in working to establish a just, comprehensive peace and achieve Arab solidarity. It voiced support for Syria's eagerness to preserve the Arab nation's supreme pan-Arab interests. The delegation praised and valued the NPF experience in Syria, noting that this experience has proven its importance and worthiness. The delegation reviewed the activities of the parties taking part in the delegation and their role in Jordan. It stressed the need to achieve cooperation among Arab parties through dialogue that strengthens ties and opens wide horizons for joint pan-Arab action.

Ba'th Official Meets Delegation

JN2601183395 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 26 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Comrade Dr. Sulayman Qaddah, assistant regional secretary of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, this morning received a delegation from the leaderships of Jordanian opposition parties, currently on a visit to Syria upon the invitation of the Central Command of the National Progressive Front [NPF].

During the meeting, talks centered on the Arab situation, the developments in the peace process, and the great economic and social developments made by Syria under the glorious Corrective Movement. Comrade Dr. Qaddah reviewed the developments in the political situation and Syria's principled pan-Arab stand toward these developments. He stressed the importance of coordination and cooperation among pan-Arab parties and national movements in order to face the state of fragmentation and weakness prevailing in the region. He underlined the efforts Syria and His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad have exerted and continue to exert to end the state of fragmentation and revive Arab solidarity so that it is capable of facing the challenges posed by the forces hostile to the Arab nation to fragment the Arab nation and dominate the nation's destinies.

He stressed Syria's rejection of an incomplete peace that does not meet the legitimate ambitions of our people and nation. He outlined Syria's concept and vision of a just and comprehensive peace based on the principles international legitimacy and the UN resolutions that ensure Israeli withdrawal to behind the 4 June 1967 borders and from southern Lebanon and the realization of equal security for all sides.

The representatives of the Jordanian parties voiced their support for the Syrian stand in the peace talks, which represents the conscience of all Arab citizens. They praised the principled pan- Arab stands and the wise policy adopted by Syria under struggler President Hafiz al-Asad.

Delegation Members Comment on Visit

JN2601200395 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 26 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Comrade Dr. Sulayman Qaddah, assistant regional secretary of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, this morning received a delegation from the leaderships of various Jordanian opposition parties. [passage omitted]

Regarding the importance of the visit, Taysir al-Zibri, secretary general of the Jordanian People's Democratic Party-Hashd, said:

[Begin al-Zibri recording] I believe that the visit is necessary at this particular time, when we are confronting political settlement projects. We are facing two possibilities. First, the imposition of more forms of political settlement, which are not based on the resolutions of international legitimacy and which disrupt the unity of the Arab negotiating position, as happened in previous agreements. Therefore, we are trying to reach a fair settlement based on the resolutions of international legitimacy. We believe that since the beginning, Syria's negotiating position has been based on political foundations, namely, the need to apply the resolutions of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principles. We believe that through this solidarity stand, we stress our desire for peace and for a just peace based on the legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arab people and all the Arab peoples, particularly the Arab cordon states.

We also believe that Syria's firm national position will reflect on the overall Arab situation. It will reflect on the brave Palestinian intifadah, the role of the Arab liberation movement that rejects the capitulatory settlement, including the Jordanian national opposition parties. We are completely optimistic that the policy adopted by the Syrian leadership is wise and is moving in the right

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direction. Therefore, we will continue to back it because it will reflect on all our peoples, namely, on Jordan and its national movement, on Palestine and its brave intifadah, on the Syrian and Lebanese peoples, and on the Arab peoples in general. [end recording]

On his assessment of this visit, 'Azmi al-Khawaja, secretary general of the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, says:

[Begin al-Khawaja recording] We have a very positive assessment of the visit, for it comes in time and coincides with a fierce and violent onslaught against the Arab nation to force it to yield to the Israeli terms in the peace process. Undoubtedly, this visit comes to display the Jordanian opposition's genuine solidarity with Syria's commitment to the national and pan-Arab constants in the Arab-Zionist conflict. This visit actually opens wide prospects for popular Arab solidarity and solidarity among the national Arab liberation movements in confronting the capitulationist solutions, such as this peace that they are trying empty of any content. As we understand it, peace must be just and comprehensive and must provide for the restoration of the national and pan-Arab rights of the Palestinian people and the Arab nation—Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine. Peace must be based on the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy. This visit has opened prospects for a genuine solidarity and concerted efforts to confront the capitulation process and the process of normalization, especially in view of some Arab regime's race to lift the Arab boycott of Israel and to start the process of normalization. Hence the importance of the timing of this visit, especially since all pressures are now being focused against Syria. After they succeeded on the Palestinian and Jordanian tracks, only the Syrian and Lebanese tracks are now left. Therefore, it is our duty and the duty of all opposition and nationalist forces in the Arab homeland to stand by Syria in confronting these pressures and insisting on national and pan-Arab constants. We are well aware that without the Palestinians restoring their national rights to their territory, self- determination, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, the repatriation of the refugees, the restoration of Jerusalem, and the removal of settlements, there can be no peace and the Arab-Zionist conflict cannot be settled. [end recording]

Delegation Commends Peace Stand

JN2701100395

[FBIS Editorial Report] Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic, at 0530 GMT on 27 January, immediately after the scheduled 0515 GMT newscast, carries a 13-minute report on statements by three members of a Jordanian "opposition" party delegation currently visiting Syria at the invitation of the Central Command of the National Progressive Front [NPF].

Radio correspondent 'Abd-al-Hamid Tawfiq interviews the three Jordanian opposition figures.

Fu'ad Dabbur, deputy secretary of the Central Command of the Jordanian Progressive Arab Ba'th Party, speaks about the visit, saying: "Given the developments that have taken place on the Arab scene, as well as the concessions made by the Oslo accord and the subsequent Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, the Jordanian opposition parties have reached the conclusion that the Syrian position epitomizes the masses' aspirations and ambitions, and converges with their own viewpoint, which demands the return of Arab rights to their owners, if peace is to be achieved. That is why the Jordanian opposition parties have sent a delegation to the Syrian Arab Republic, and held talks with the parties forming the NPF and Syrian officials. The Jordanian opposition delegation has come to Syria to coordinate efforts in order to confront the dangers posed to the Arab nation, and communicate our appreciation of the wise Syrian policy, which is grounded in national and pan-Arab constants, and seeks to render the peace process a success. We believe that for peace to be sustainable, it has to be just and comprehensive. As for the peace that only promotes Israeli interests, it is a false peace. It is neither sustainable, nor viable."

Dabbur notes that successive "martyrdom operations" have come in the aftermath of the signing of the Oslo accord. This demonstrates, he maintains, that the masses are opposed to "subordination." Given all this, the Jordanian opposition parties found themselves compelled to send a delegation to "fraternal Syria to consolidate the Syrian stand" and express their support for the Syrian political leadership, because it reflects the masses' aspirations, sentiments, and feelings.

Dabbur adds that he pins great hopes on the Syrian leadership and its efforts.

Milhim al-Tall, secretary general of the Constitutional Jordanian Arab Front Party, comments on separate deals and Israeli "penetrations", saying: "We wished that no Arab party would sign a unilateral treaty or agreement with the occupiers. The fact that such a development has taken place is regrettable. We did not set the condition that the Arab parties be represented in a single Arab delegation to the peace talks if this was found to be impossible to achieve. It was not possible to form such a delegation. Nonetheless, we were surprised by serious penetrations that led to the Oslo accord and the Jordanian-Israeli agreement."

Driven by an awareness of the dangers posed by departure from the Madrid conference's terms of reference, the opposition parties cautioned against the consequences of pursuing unilateral solutions, he notes.

Al-Tall adds: "It was our wish that coordination would be effected and maintained with the brothers in Syria and Lebanon. We did not imagine that the Arab states could condone Israel's failure to comply with the content, resolutions, and principles of international legitimacy. Confronted with these realities, we have consistently agreed that the way to combat normalization with

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Israel lies in enlightening people about the dangers posed to Jordan's dignity, economy, society, and Arab affiliation. We argued that we would seek to empty this agreement of its content. What is important in this regard is that we have unshakable faith in Syria's policy."

Syria has become the paragon of steadfastness in a wilderness of deterioration, al-Tall contends. Syria is engaged in a sound domestic construction endeavor. Besides, it has not abandoned a single Arab right. We believe that whatever benefits Syria is bound to promote the higher Arab interests, he maintains.

Al-Tall commends al-Asad's "wisdom, farsightedness, and legacy of militant experiences." This prompts him to believe that al-Asad will continue his efforts to rebuild Arab solidarity.

For his part, 'Ali 'Amir, secretary general of the Jordanian Democratic Progressive Party, comments on the motives behind the launching of the coalition of the Jordanian opposition parties and its political program, saying: "As a matter of fact, several Jordanian political currents and national parties have sought to create and crystallize common denominators so the masses may be able to cope with the challenges of the phase; namely, the challenges related to the peaceful settlement, democracy, and national unity."

The opposition parties believe that the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty is not conducive to the achievement of their goals. In the aftermath of the signing of the peace treaty, the number of the parties represented in the coalition rose from eight to 11, he adds. Trade unions and professional associations also view the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty as a problem that needs to be addressed, he notes. "These parties are currently agreed on the need to address the negative repercussions of this treaty, particularly normalization, which is meant to impose a complete Israeli hegemony on us," he contends.

The opposition parties seek to mobilize public opinion against normalization, because Israel has failed to meet the requirements of peace, 'Amir concludes.

Al-Asad Reportedly Asks Arabs To Lift Iraq Embargo

JN3001151495 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 30 Jan 95 pp 1, 11

[Report by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Khatib]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam revealed to the delegation of Jordanian opposition parties which visited Damascus last week that Syria asked the Gulf states, specifically Saudi Arabia, to lift the Arab blockade imposed on Iraq. The Syrian request was made during the Alexandria summit.

'Azmi al-Khawaja, secretary general of the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, told AL-MAJD that Khaddam informed them of the Syrian request during his meeting with them in Damascus, but the hard-line Kuwaiti position prevented the Arab and Gulf states in particular from lifting the blockade because these states fear Iraq's intentions toward them. Khaddam said that Syria understands their fears and cannot put further pressure on them.

Al-Khawaja explained that Khaddam briefed the delegation on the Syrian efforts in this regard when it urged the Syrian leadership to work to lift the blockade imposed on the Iraqi people. The delegation noted that the question of Arab solidarity cannot be raised at a time when the unjust blockade against Iraq, Libya, and Sudan is maintained. [passage omitted]

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Afghanistan

Rabbani Addresses Peace Process in Ramadan Speech

LD3001212795 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 30 Jan 95

[Message by President Borhanoddin Rabbani on the occasion of the month of Ramadan—read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate, dear compatriots,

I congratulate you dear compatriots, wherever you live, and the Muslims of the world on the arrival of the holy month of Ramadan, the month of piety. The holy month of Ramadan is the month of forgiveness and blessing. Holy Koran, the book of guidance of mankind to light from deviation, was revealed in this month. [words indistinct]

The Islamic State of Afghanistan, whose every hope and wish is to serve the country and to ensure the tranquility of the nation, is the standard bearer of outstanding steps for peace. Having such humanitarian and sincere wishes, over the past two years we have many times put forward specific and practical proposals and plans for the cessation of fighting and the restoration of permanent peace. During this time, the state has always attached much value to the will, view, and decisions of the people and has tried to implement and put into practice the things the nation wants and demands.

Dear compatriots, we are of the opinion that the people of a nation should determine their political regime and decide on their country and state leadership, as it is the order of the holy religion of Islam. [words indistinct]

Over the past two years the Islamic State of Afghanistan has put emphasis on the freedom of the people and the observation of their rights. [words indistinct] Unfortunately, some elements and groups in collusion with foreigners have created such a situation, hatched conspiracies, and mounted coup d'etats, which had no result, but were against the high interests of the country, against the Islamic regime, and against the stability and strength of the country.

Being of the same opinion as the nation, the Islamic state calls the assurance of peace and the cessation of any kind of hostility or conflagration an inevitable need of the Muslim society of the country. It is for this reason that the state has clearly and emphatically expressed that it is sincerely ready to transfer power to a such a mechanism that represents the will and the wish of the people. To realize this wish, the state supports the efforts of the special delegation of the United Nations led by His Excellency Mahmud Mestiri, which is making efforts and striving to achieve a reasonable and permanent solution of the country's issues. Even it has been asked to further escalate its peace efforts for the assurance of peace and the cessation of war in line with the will of the people of the country and the conditions and realities of Afghan society. [words indistinct] cities and highways to be completely safe and the movement of the people and vehicles shall be carried out in a confident way.

The present situation and circumstances demand that all groups, especially those who claim their main aim is to alleviate the problems of the people and the elimination of the obstacles that have been created in the way of meeting the primary needs of our compatriots, will make fruitful and joint efforts, in a coordinated way, with their Islamic regime to ensure all out peace in the country and to escalate the peace process in the country.

As it has been a vanguard in every peace step in the past and following its previous statements, the Islamic State of Afghanistan, as an act of respect for the holy month of Ramadan, which is a month of forgiveness and blessing, continues the observation of the permanent cease fire, and instructs all state armed forces to observe it, with the exception being if they come under attack by the opponents. In that case, they will defend themselves.

Once again I congratulate you on the occasion of the month of Ramadan and ask almighty God to accept your prayers and obedience to Him, and to restore a permanent peace in our country. I hope that such an atmosphere will come into being in our country and that our Muslim nation is able to fulfill this act of obedience [ebadat] to its God in full freedom, security, and in a fear and worry free atmosphere.

Heavy Fighting Continues Despite UN Meeting

LD3001222895 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The fighting, which started the day before yesterday between the jihadi forces of Kohdaman and the communist coalition force, still continues. Quoting jihadi sources of Kohdaman-Parwan, a correspondent of Radio Message of Freedom reports: Pursuing its adventurist policy and to undermine the UN peace process, the fighting, which the infamous Supervisory Council band has started by attacking the mojahedin bases in Kohdaman and Parwan since the day before yesterday, has faced a strong resistance from the jihadi commanders in Estalef, Qarabagh, and other parts of Kohdaman.

According to this report, in an extraordinary council, the jihadi commanders of Kohdaman have taken due measures to confront the unmanly attacks of the forces of sedition and corruption, and have resolved that they will not allow, at any price, the hireling coalitionists to evict the jihadi forces from the area or to disarm the mojahedin. The report adds: Now heavy fighting is going on in Estalef and Qarabagh, and the jihadi forces of the area are strongly defending their areas. Similarly, the complete control of Kabul-Parwan highway is in the hands of the mojahedin. The unmanly attacks by the communist

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forces of Masud has angered the mojahedin of Kohdaman and have brought about the possibility that the fighting will spread to Kabul and other parts of Parwan.

The report adds that the hireling coalition forces have launched a series of attacks on the bases of Commander Agha Sherin's men.

HCC Begins 'Clearing Up' Operations in Konduz

LD2901175995 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] During the course of a popular operation, forces of the High Coordination Council [HCC] for the Islamic Revolution of Afghanistan HCC have captured and brought under its control the districts of Chardara, Aliabad, and areas stretching to Dosaraka near the airport in Konduz. In a radio contact, a responsible HCC source told a Radio Message of Freedom correspondent that the operation was started when the hireling coalition forces launched attacks on HCC positions the other day. But being combat prepared HCC forces started a clearing up operation in response, as a result of which Chardara, Aliabad, and areas up to Dosaraka near the Konduz Airport have been completely cleared of mercenaries and have subjected their last defense lines to attack and heavy fighting continues.

According to this report, Dr. Abdollah, a leader of the Supervisory Council, is under siege of the HCC forces along with his men. The report adds that during the course of the operation 21 of the enemy were killed and injured, and 80 others were taken prisoner by the mojahedin. Similarly, 500 from the coalition lead by Amer Karim, Abdol Qodus, and Mullah Matin have joined the HCC forces after the areas were captured.

The report says that during the clearing up operation the mojahedin have captured three enemy tanks, two pieces of 76mm artillery, a (?ZU), a BM1 [rocket launcher] set, two medium mortars, one (?AGS), eight rocket launchers, 11 PK machine-guns, 110 Kalashnikovs, a large quantity of ammunition, a number of motor vehicles, and a large quantity of logistic material.

HCC Forces Capture Konduz Air Field

LD3001200795 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In the course of their consecutive advances, the High Coordination Council [HCC] forces captured the Konduz Airport. In a wireless contact, a responsible source of the HCC forces reported to us that in the course of their mopping up operation, the HCC forces cleared up the Konduz Province airport from the forces of sedition and corruption. The report says a large number of the coalition men were killed and wounded and a large quantity of weapons and ammunition were captured by the mojahedin. The report adds that [words indistinct] the fighting continues in other directions, and that the positions of the coalition are under heavy attacks.

According to this report, the coalition forces have lost their combat moral and have no strength to confront the mojahedin.

Bangladesh

Donors' Criticism of 'Slow' Reforms Refuted

BK3001054495 Hong Kong AFP in English 1200 GMT 29 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, Jan 29 (AFP)—Donor countries are critical of the "slow pace" of Bangladesh's economic reforms, but Finance Minister Saifur Rahman put the blame on the country's long-standing political standoff.

In a review meeting Saturday [28 January] ahead of the Aid Consortium meet in Paris in April, representatives of donor countries and agencies complained about "staggering sloth in privatisation and administrative restructuring," newspapers reported Sunday.

The World Bank and the United States representatives were prominent among those who voiced reservations. Other representatives were from Britain, Australia, Germany, Canada, the Asian Development Bank, International Monetary Fund and the United Nations Development Programme.

Rahman said that months of political unrest were to blame for slow economic progress and that the government feared the opposition would exploit issues linked to reforms.

The Bangladeshi opposition has been campaigning for Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's resignation and elections under a neutral caretaker government, alleging that some by-elections were rigged and free polls were impossible under Zia.

The opposition and professional groups have resorted to frequent strikes as well as road and railway blockades as part of their protests.

Donor representatives expressed unhappiness over the power sector, noting that the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA), was incurring about 30 percent system loss, and the state of Bangladesh Railways was also "poor."

Rahman said the system loss of DESA was 23 percent, while the railways "needed massive investment to survive."

But news reports said rampant corruption was a major factor in the two state-owned entities' present state.

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India

Envoy Denies Firms Aid Iranian Poison Gas Plant

BK3101075495 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 31 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has denied newspaper reports alleging that Indian companies are helping Iran build a poison gas plant. India's deputy chief of mission in Washington, K. (Sibbal), today dismissed as preposterous the reports in the WASHINGTON TIMES.

Japan To Provide Grant for Education, New Bridge

BK3101051095 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Japan will extend to India a grant assistance of over 950 million yen, equivalent to 29.5 crore rupees. An agreement to this effect was signed in New Delhi today by the Japanese ambassador, Mr. (Chuso Yamada), and the finance secretary, Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia. A major part of the assistance is for a project to improve the educational media production facilities of Indira Gandhi National Open University. The grant will also be used for debt relief and for construction of a new bridge over the Yamuna River in east Delhi.

Official: Intelsat Accord 'Milestone' in Space Program

BK3101100395 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 31 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has entered the global space market in a big way. This follows the Intelsat [International Telecommunications Satellite Organization] organization buying a portion of the capacity of the proposed Indian satellite INSAT-2 E, scheduled for launch in 1997. Under an agreement signed between the Indian Space Research Organization, ISRO, and Intelsat in Washington last night, India will earn about $100 million in 10 years. The ISRO chairman, Dr. K. Kasturirangan, described the accord as an important milestone for the country's space program. He said India will be happy to consider similar commercial offers.

In a special message, the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, said the deal is a recognition of the capabilities of the Indian space program by the international community. The message was read out by the Indian ambassador to the United States, Mr. Siddhartha Shankar Ray, at the brief signing ceremony.

Ministry Rejects Privatization of Electronic Media

BK2801084295 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A spokesman of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry has clarified that there is no proposal to privatize Doordarshan [television] and All India Radio. Referring to press reports attributed to the secretary of the ministry in this regard, the spokesman said the secretary participating in a seminar at Madras on the 23d of this month have said that the government is actively considering the issue of permitting private TV and radio stations in the country. The spokesman said the secretary also clearly indicated that as of now no decision has been taken in this regard.

Article Says Indicators Point to Economic 'Boom'

BK3001094995 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 28 Jan 95 p 11

[Article by Prem Shankar Jha: "Heading for a Boom"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ever since it began, various commentators have been trying to minimise the significance of the steep drop in the share price index, which took the BSE [Bombay Stock Exchange] a full 25 per cent below the peak it attained in September on Monday [30 January]. The favoured explanation of the moneymen in Bombay is that the earlier rise was way out of line with earnings and a correction was in any case overdue. They also point to the steady decline in the price of GDRs [global depository receipts], which cannot fail to affect domestic prices, and the repercussions of the crash of the Mexican peso, which has made foreign institutional investors pull some of their money out of India in a hurry. But these are only a part of the explanation. Why are the GDRs declining? And why did most of the fall in domestic share prices take place after the results of the Andhra and Karnataka elections? The answer is that an open economy does not like, and indeed cannot afford, too much political uncertainty.

The growing crisis in the Congress party could not have come at a worse time, for it is in complete contrast to the performance of the economy. All the indications show that the boom that began in about April last year steadily grew stronger in the closing months of 1994. A sure indicator is the continuing surge in the output of the capital goods industries. Since April 1994, these industries have been recording a hectic growth of 20 per cent or more. The contrast between this sector's performance in 1994 with that of 1993 could not be more marked. Between April and September 1993, the output of capital goods had declined by 10.1 per cent. The turnaround is therefore of the order of 30 per cent.

The recovery of the capital goods industries is providing the "accelerator" effect that the economy needed to turn a recovery into a boom. In 1991, and the first nine months of 1992, overall industrial production had not fallen despite a 27 per cent compression in non-oil imports. This was because the overspill of orders placed during the seventh plan period with the capital goods makers kept the growth of this sector fairly robust.

Then in October 1992, these orders ran out, and the capital goods industry recorded falls ranging from 8 to 17

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per cent in the next three quarters. This pulled down the overall index in 1993, despite a strengthening recovery in the consumer and intermediate goods that began in the second half of the year.

At the end of 1993, the fall in capital goods output bottomed out, and this pushed the rate of industrial growth up to 6 per cent. Since May-April this year the capital goods industries has entered another expansionary cycle.

Largely because of this the overall rate of industrial growth of this period has climbed to 8.1 per cent, against 3.3 per cent in the same period of 1993-94.

One indication that the boom is strengthening is the acceleration of industrial growth. Between April and July, industrial growth averaged 7.1 per cent. This went up to 8.3 per cent in August, and if the first estimates for October are correct, to a whopping 11.6 per cent in that month. To a considerable extent, this spurt has been caused by a parallel surge in the capital goods sector. Between April and June, the capital goods industries grow at an average of 16 per cent per annum. But in July and August, the growth wen up to over 27 per cent.

Another indication is the rapid increase in the number of new investment proposals registered with governments. In March 1994 total investment in projects worth more than Rs 5 crore [rupees] amounted to Rs 6,38,000 crore ($210 billion). By December the figure had risen to Rs 36,000 crore (s$140 billion). [all figures in paragraph as published]

Although there are no official statistics for industrial production after October, there are several indications that the boom is continuing. One is the continuing steep rise in imports. In a completely open economy, there is no necessary correlation between imports and industrial growth. But since the import of consumer goods remains, by and large, banned in India, most of the imports go directly into industrial production.

This is particularly true of non-oil imports. Not only did these increase by over 30 per cent between April and October, but there are indications that this figure may have jumped by as much as a third in November.

Another signal that the boom is still strengthening is the surge in bank credit to the commercial sector. This has created nearly half of the disturbingly large increase in money supply (M3) of 21 per cent that has taken place between April and November. Nearly all of the increase in lending to the commercial sector has taken place after September, a sure sign that the tempo of economic activity is rising.

Had the increase in imports taken place solely to meet domestic market demand, as happened frequently in the days before the economic reforms, it would have been a cause for worry. But the rise in imports has been paralleled by an equally strong surge in exports. The rate of growth has been rising here too. Between April and July, 1994, exports grew by only 8.7 per cent over the same period of 1993. But in the next two months the growth rate picked up to 24.3 per cent, and in October to 27 per cent. In November the rate fell slightly to a still healthy 21 per cent.

Thus over the first eight months of 1994-95, exports have grown by 15.1 per cent over the previous year. If the present trend persists, the year could end with an 10 per cent growth in exports, or three per cent more than what the government had dared to hope for.

The only cause for worry is the disturbing high rate of inflation. Since November, it has stuck at 9.6 to 10 per cent, and shows no sign of coming down despite the bumper winter harvest the country has reaped.

The main cause is the very high rate of growth of money supply—5 per cent higher than the target the government had set. While in the first five months of the year (April to August) the main cause was the very high rate of growth of foreign exchange reserves, in the last four it has been the hectic growth of credit to the commercial sector.

The government has succeeded, at least for the time being, in curbing the inflow of foreign exchange by asking companies raising money through GDR issues to keep their money abroad till they need it to import capital goods and the like. This has led to the first ever fall in reserves with the Reserve Bank of India, of $400 million in seven weeks between the end of October and December 16, and therefore a corresponding decrease in money supply. However reserves still stand at $10.4 billion. If the GDRs held abroad are included, this figure is considerably higher.

However, that will not be sufficient to curb inflation. If it continues to strengthen there is every likelihood that the economy will overheat sometime in the next six months. That is another good reason for the government to cut back its fiscal deficit by no matter what means. Populist concessions that push it up further will rebound on the Congress party and government in 1996.

Economic Adviser Interviewed on Debt Situation

BK3001090095 Delhi THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 29 Jan 95 p 17

["Excerpts" from an interview with Government Chief Economic Adviser Shankar N. Acharya by Tapan Dasgupta; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] **Q: The World Bank Debt Tables puts India as the third largest debtor whereas just a year ago, India ranked fifth. How has this happened?**

A: I am not aware which were the countries which were ahead of India a year ago. The Debt Tables gives the position as was on March 31, 1994. But the point to note is that India's external debt which was growing at an average of $6 billion annually in the 80s, and reached the

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peak of $8 [as published] in 1991-1992 has registered a firm down trend. The net addition came down to $3 billion in 1992-1993, and to just $1 billion in 1993-1994. During the first half of the 1994-1995, there was even a marginal decline in debt. This I think is much more interesting than whether we are number three, four or five.

We are conscious about the need to contain the growth of external debt, particularly the short-term debt. We have brought this down as a percentage of the total external debt from 10 percent to 4 percent in the current financial year.

Q: Do you think it will be possible to stick to the future projections of external debt. How do you visualise the debt situation, say by 2000 A.D.?

A: I am not aware of the future projection. But it depends on good policies. Bringing down fiscal deficit will be part of a good policy.

Q: What about current account deficit?

A: Yes, that is another important element. For the last two to three years, Mexico had been running a current account deficit of 6 to 7 percent of GDP. In India's case, the current account deficit peaked at 3.5 percent of GDP in 1991, and in 1993-94, it was only 0.1 per cent.

Q: But was that not due to the industrial recession because of which import growth was negative?

A: Yes, but that is only part of the story. This year, there has been strong import growth but the current account deficit will not exceed 0.5 per cent of the GDP when the final figures come out. The fact is that we are managing the economy well.

Q: What do you think are the essential features of what you claim to be good management?

A: Well, because of our policies, exports are growing. Invisibles are improving because more money from abroad is coming through the official channel. Imports and exports are close to each other. In the 80s, export earnings covered 55 percent of our imports, whereas in the last three years, exports covered 90 percent of our imports. As long as the exports and imports move together, there is no problem.

I would like to make two separate points to emphasise why the Indian situation is different from that of Mexico. First, India's current account deficit is now 0.5 percent against 8 percent of GDP for Mexico. Thailand had also been running a current account deficit of 5 percent of GDP and there was run on capital flows but Thailand survived the shock because of large foreign exchange reserves.

Second, Mexico had capital account convertibility whereas our approach is much more measured. Of course the finance minister had been saying that we will have capital account convertibility but there is no commitment. We do not have a detailed time frame for it.

Third, Mexico had much larger capital inflows in the short term, whereas our total inflows in the last three years is just $6 billion. Fourth, Mexico had a lot of foreign funds put into treasury bills. We have none.

And finally, Mexico followed a stable exchange rate policy because of the government's commitment but India has never given such a commitment. It is true that the Reserve Bank has not allowed the exchange rate of the rupee to appreciate but there is no commitment that the rate will not be determined by the balance of market forces.

Q: Does that mean that in case capital flows surge, the rupee will appreciate?

A: The capital flows can increase. But we have been cautious and taken appropriate measures. We have put disincentives for various non-residents accounts to make them unattractive. Cash reserve ratios on such deposits has been raised, interest rate has been brought down. In any case in the current international environment, I do not see the possibility of sudden surging of capital flows in the next three to four months.

Congress-I Withdraws Support for Uttar Pradesh

BK3001011095 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0035 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Congress-I has withdrawn support to the Mulayam Singh Yadav government in Uttar Pradesh with immediate effect. A unanimous resolution adopted to this effect at a meeting of the party's working committee in New Delhi late last night also approved the suspension of Mr. Arjun Singh. The resolution on the withdrawal of support to the 13-month-old SP-BSP [Samajwadi Party-Bahujan Samaj Party] combine government noted that the law and order situation in the state has deteriorated. The CWC [Congress Working Committee] charged the Mulayam Singh government with failure on all fronts, including fighting against communal and caste forces. The resolution also spoke about atrocities on women and scheduled castes and increasing crime rate.

Replying to a question, the party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, ruled out any tie-up with BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. He said the Congress-I will not support the BJP-sponsored no-confidence motion against the state government.

He also disclosed that the request of the former human resource development minister, Mr. Arjun Singh, for the extension of time for the show-cause notice was noted by the CWC. Mr. Gadgil said the Disciplinary Action Committee was seized of the matter. All the correspondence with Mr. Arjun Singh was circulated in the committee. All the CWC members, except Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, attended the meeting. The chief ministers of

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Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Goa, Nagaland, Pondicherry, Maharashtra, and Assam were also there.

In its reaction, the Samajwadi Party general secretary, Mr. Raghu Thakur, claimed that the SP-BSP government is not in danger and the combine is in a position to prove its majority on the floor of the house.

The president of the UP CC-I [Uttar Pradesh Congress-I Committee] dissociated with the state unit from the satyagrah [passive resistance] being organized by the supporters of Mr. N.D. Tiwari in Lucknow next month. Mr. Jitendra Prasad said in Delhi that the party is committed to fighting communal and caste forces in the state. The supporters of Mr. Tiwari have announced that they would go ahead with the program even after the CWC's decision.

Draft Resolution for CPI-M Congress Reported

95AS0186A Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 29 Dec 94 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] Central Committee currently finalizing the draft political resolution in Calcutta, has held the Congress (I) and its Government at the Centre responsible for compromising with communal parties and giving a boost to caste-based politics in the country.

The Narasimha Rao Government has been blamed for its inaction when the Babri mosque was being demolished by the Bharatiya Janata Party, and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad volunteers in December 1992.

The draft political resolution will later be circulated among the party units for amendments which will be considered at the next party congress to be held in mid-April next year.

Referring to the last Assembly election in Uttar Pradesh, the draft resolution says that though the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] failed to capture power in the State, organizationally the party proved itself quite strong.

The U.P. Assembly elections, however, catapulted the Bahujan Samaj Party—an out and out casteist party—into the vortex of power, a development which does not augur well for the Indian democracy. Fortunately, the BSP [Bahujan Samaj Party] was decimated in the recent Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh, the draft resolution notes.

The Central Committee has taken solace in the Janata Dal regaining power in Karnataka in the recently held Assembly elections, but appears worried that the BJP, campaigning on a communal plane, made a major headway in terms of seats there.

Since the Janata Dal is far from being a cohesive force, the CPI(M) is not optimistic about its resurfacing as an all-India outfit—internal bickering sapping much of its strength in the States.

The draft resolution, however, does not propose to take any initiative again for the formation of a National Front-type set-up prior to the next Lok Sabha election.

It hopes that the picture of alignment of political parties in the country will be clear in course of the next few months, possibly before the party congress.

On the economic front, the resolution criticizes the Centre for persisting with the liberalized economic policy, which has, besides giving rise to security and sugar scams, "increased people's misery" by way of price rise.

The public sector is being allowed to die and indigenous private sector industries, too, face a bleak future as they are being asked to compete with powerful multinational and foreign companies.

Like many other Third World countries, India would be at a great disadvantage by accepting the GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade] agreement, the draft resolution says.

The draft resolution also praises China for adopting economic reforms compatible with its Socialist structure.

Rao Interviewed on Singh, Election Prospects

BK3101022795 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 25 Jan 95 p 5

["Excerpts" of interview with Prime Minister Narasimha Rao by unidentified PTI correspondent in New Delhi on 24 January]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [THE PIONEER] **What are the main achievements of your Government during the year 1994?**

[Rao] It is over three years since my Government embarked on economic reforms. The economic health of the country can be gauged from the improved performance of both agriculture and industry last year. The growth In the manufacturing sector in the first four months of the year was 9 per cent. Last year Rs [rupees] 45,000 crore was raised in the primary market and a similar amount was disbursed by our financial institutions. Similarly, investment in the social sector has manifolded.

My visits to Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, Russia, Vietnam and Singapore gave me an opportunity to strengthen bilateral ties in various areas. We continue to pursue an active foreign policy that seeks to strengthen friendship and cooperation where it exists and overcome differences wherever they come up. The internal situation in the country showed improvement. The normalcy restored in Punjab was followed up with economic activity. The situation in J&K [Jammu and Kashmir] improved perceptibly.

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[THE PIONEER] What are the main challenges facing India in the year 1995?

[Rao] The biggest challenge before us today is that of eradicating poverty. This can be achieved only with careful macro and micro level policies and programmes. Our economic policy must ensure that investment grows, productivity increases and prices are kept under control. No programme for eradicating poverty can succeed unless the economy is sound.

[THE PIONEER] What impact will the reverses in the recent Assembly elections have on the economic policies?

[Rao] Victory and defeat are part of the electoral process in a democracy. I do not accept the view that the vote is a verdict against the economic reforms. However, if some development programmes of the Government have not reached the people, we will have to ensure their proper implementation.

[THE PIONEER] What are the reasons for the poor performance of the Congress in these elections?

[Rao] A ruling party does face some handicap because there is always some discontent or the other, particularly at the grassroot level, which may build up over some time and manifest itself at election time. The party also suffered on account of the dissidents and rebel candidates.

[THE PIONEER] There is a perception that India is in for a period of political instability and that there is a crisis of confidence in the Government. Your comment?

[Rao] [Rao] I disagree. It is true that the defeat of the Congress in some of the States was a setback but this has not led to a picture of instability, as you put it. A change of the Government in a democracy does not imply a crisis of confidence. If anything it shows the strength of the political system.

[THE PIONEER]Mr Arjun Singh's resignation letter appears to be an indictment of the Government and your leadership...

[Rao] I have recommended acceptance of his resignation reluctantly. I reject his allegations. They seem to be more as contrived grounds for resignation.

[THE PIONEER]What motivated Mr Arjun Singh to embark on this path? Is there a danger of split in the party?

[Rao] You will have to ask Arjun Singh for his motives. There is no danger of a split in the party. As far as disciplinary action is concerned decisions will be taken.

[THE PIONEER]Your critics say that there is a great degree of indecisiveness in your handling of burning issues...

[Rao] My critics should either accuse me of indecisiveness or of moving too fast with the reforms. Both certainly cannot be true at the same time. Indecisiveness could not have produced the kind of changes the country has seen in the last three-and-a-half years. Could I be immodest enough to take some credit for this change? Calm and dispassionate handling of a situation should not be confused with indecisiveness.

[THE PIONEER]When are the elections likely in Kashmir? Would India allow international observers to oversee these elections?

[Rao] Efforts are being made to accelerate development works in Jammu and Kashmir by securing people's participation, reinvigorating the local administration and enhancing the cooperation and confidence of the people in the administration. While it would not be possible and even desirable to set dates or timeframes at this juncture, Government is committed to holding elections in the State. The question of international observers appears unnecessary. We do not envisage any role for them.

[THE PIONEER]Is the Government considering a review of TADA [Terrorism and Disruptive Activities act]?

[Rao] That is being considered. We have got all the options now before us. I have already said this is a law which has been sometimes misused. But this law was considered necessary when it was passed. Its validity has been upheld by the Supreme Court. Today, we have to see what are the provisions which were responsible for the hardship caused to the people while applying this law.

[THE PIONEER]Would you look at amendments to the law or its repeal?

[Rao] All the options are open to us. But TADA is still valid. It is not a law which has completely become unnecessary. It has been misused in some cases. That misuse is not on. The hardship that has been caused as a result of that misuse needs to be alleviated and prevented. Subject to these parametres we will take decisions.

[THE PIONEER]As party president how do you rate the chances of Congress in the ensuing Assembly elections?

[Rao] Well, the chances are very fair. The failures of some governments, non-Congress governments, are very clear and they have been understood by the people.

[THE PIONEER]Mr Vajpayee says that the Indian political system faces a major crisis and it does not have the flexibility or safeguards to provide stability to the Government. Your views?

[Rao] I am not aware of the whole theme that he developed and spoke about. The Indian system has, I think, stood the test of time by now. But, of course, as we go along every system comes under certain new strains and wisdom lies in being alive to those strains. These are matters connected with the system.

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[THE PIONEER]Do you also think that certain changes ought to come about for greater flexibility?

[Rao] I am convinced about the need to look into, monitor and understand the working of the system in greater detail. In that if one finds some deficiency or finds a need for new measures in view of the new situations we should always be willing to do that.

Papers Speculate on Status of Prime Minister Rao

Support From Ministers

95AS0187A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 26 Dec 94 p 13

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, December 25—Almost the entire council of ministers tonight expressed its support to Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and termed Arjun Singh's allegations against the leadership as "baseless, mischievous and pernicious."

Forty one Central ministers met at the residence of tourism and civil aviation minister Ghulam Nabi Azad and after a discussion, issued a signed one-page statement expressing their shock over Mr Arjun Singh choosing "a moment like this to strike at the leadership of the party and government of which he is a part." The entire group of ministers then went to meet Mr Rao to demonstrate their solidarity with him.

Their statement said: "Having agreed to all the decisions of the government and party as member of the cabinet and the Congress working committee, it is utter irresponsibility on the part of Mr Singh to thereafter disown such decisions. Mr Singh has not followed the minimum requirement of a decent political and parliamentarian behaviour."

It added: "In parliamentary politics, electoral reverses are normal. But it is reprehensible that a senior leader who participated in all governmental and organisational decisions should choose to attack the leadership and try to disrupt the party. "Voicing confidence that the party, which had faced many ups and downs, would face with courage and conviction the opposition onslaught in future, it said that the whole party unitedly stands behind the Prime Minister and Congress president.

Those present at Mr Azad's house were Manmohan Singh, Pranab Mukherjee, C.K. Jaffer Sharief, Sheila Kaul, Jagdish Tytler, Kamal Nath, Captain Satish Sharma, Sukh Ram, Santosh Mohan Deb, G. Venkataswami, Bhuvanesh Chaturvedi, H.R. Bhardwaj, Margaret Alva, Sukhbans Kaur, Krishna Sahi, Salman Khurshid, C. Silviera, Mukul Wasnik, P.V. Rangayya Naidu, S. Krishna Kumar, Eduardo Faleiro, Col. Ram Singh, M.V. Chandrashekar Murthy, S. Mallikarjun, Balram Singh Yadav, Giridhar Gomango, M. Arunachalam, Arvind Netam, U.H. Patel, Paban Singh Ghatowar, Ms Selja and Ram Lal Rahi.

Mr Sitaram Kesri also signed the statement. Cabinet ministers like S.B. Chavan, Balram Jakhar, N.K.P. Salve and V.C. Shukla who are out of station telephoned to say they were with the Prime Minister and condemned the betrayal by Mr Arjun Singh.

Those who briefed the press were Mr Azad, Mr Kamal Nath, Mr Chaturvedi and Mr Deb.

The Gujarat chief minister and a group of Punjab MPs [member of Parliament] were also present at Mr Azad's residence. Congress parliamentary party (CPP) secretary Manoranjan Bhakta, who was also present at this meeting, issued a separate press release on behalf of the CPP regretting that Mr Arjun Singh's "conscience pricked him" only after the party's debacle and when the party has to face the electoral battle in five states. "Unfortunately, it assists the opposition party's gameplan to tarnish the image of the Congress," the statement said, adding that Mr Singh should have kept the party's interest above everything.

"Mr Singh's action will contribute towards strengthening the forces of communalism and fundamentalism which will affect the unity and integrity of the country," it said, expressing solidarity with Mr Rao for having converted a minority government to give political stability to the nation. It recommended that Mr Singh's resignation be accepted.

Mr A.R. Antulay called upon the people not to fall a prey to "these gimmicks, tactics and sinister designs" and said that at this time Mr Arjun Singh should have stood by Mr Rao as party interest should take precedence over all petty personal gains.

PTI adds: Nearly 20 Congress MPs tonight strongly criticised Mr Arjun Singh, urging him to "refrain from encouraging the forces of communalism, feudalism and obscurantism," which he had himself blamed for weakening the Congress party.

The MPs, in a joint statement here, expressed full faith in the leadership of Mr Narasimha Rao and said, "we have confidence that under him, the party will remain united and will continue to remain the main political force in the country."

They expressed shock that Mr Arjun Singh being a senior party leader had chosen to resign from the government at a time when the party needed to stand unitedly to face the challenge thrown by divisive and communal forces.

"It is with dismay and anguish that we find that Mr Singh has chosen to denigrate the very people who have supported him in upholding the democratic secular and egalitarian ethos of the Congress party," they said.

Sonia Gandhi's Influence

95AS0187B Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 18 Dec 94 p 1

[Article by Raju Santhanam: "Rao Survives as Sonia Prefers To Pull Strings From Behind the Scenes"]

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[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, Dec. 17—It is now clear that nothing will come out of the intense speculation on the fate of Mr Narasimha Rao following the rout of his party in the South.

The reason is obvious. No member of the Congress(I) Working Committee has openly demanded his resignation. And Mr Rao himself is not likely to offer it.

The only major development which could have upset this stalemate would have been a move by Mrs Sonia Gandhi. But the lady is hardly likely to risk taking a public stance against Mr Rao.

In fact, a clear signal that she was merely a "neutral umpire" in the present proceedings in the ruling party was conveyed when one of her spokesmen clarified that she had not "blessed" the Prime Minister when he called on her.

At every crisis now it is the Sonia card that is very much in evidence. Rather than attack Mr Rao from the front, party heavyweights are getting used to playing this card. Eyebrows were raised when the Union HRD [expansion not given] Minister, Mr Arjun Singh, was the first to call on her after her return from a visit abroad.

Anxious not to be left behind, even the Maharashtra Chief Minister, Mr Sharad Pawar, has joined the queue of those striving to keep the lady in good humour.

Her current importance within the Congress(I) is because there were some Rao loyalists who were claiming that a win for Mr Rao in the South would mean curtains for those who were using her name for political muscle-flexing. With the defeat the reverse appears to be happening.

The relationship between Mr Rao and Mrs Sonia Gandhi has been a tenuous one. Instead of marginalizing the role of 10, Janpath, as advised by some of his supporters, Mr Rao tried his best to prove that he was, in fact, the original loyalist. So he allowed himself to be bullied into accommodating a large number of those whose only qualification was their loyalty to the Gandhi family.

Having given her the importance and suggesting that he would be guided by her advice, Mr Rao has made the Sonia factor relevant. Of late, their relations appear to have deteriorated with a section of Rao loyalists looking suspiciously at Mr N.D. Tewari's frequent meetings with the lady.

Mrs Gandhi has also begun attending and speaking at public functions. On at least three occasions, she was accompanied by Mr Arjun Singh. On two occasions her daughter accompanied her. For Rao loyalists, these and other subtle moves were seen as efforts to weaken him.

It is in this context that the move by Mr V.C. Shukla to brief the Press on Bofors is being seen. The reaction in 10, Janpath to the fact that someone like Mr Ottavio Quattrochhi, a close and special friend of the family was named, even though the effort was to suggest that he was beyond reach, has compelled Mr Rao to dissociate himself from the move. And Mr Shukla is taking the rap.

Interestingly, Mr Arjun Singh is believed to have taken the view in internal meetings that while the Gandhi family was in no way involved, the Bofors issue should be thoroughly probed to expose the guilty and protect the innocent.

While these exercises are moves and counter-moves by both camps to appear on the right side of Mrs Gandhi, it is still too early to say whether she would like to risk severing all ties with Mr Rao and spearhead a revolt. It is clear to 10, Janpath loyalists that any move towards politics would mean that her family would once again be in national focus and attract even greater attention to the Bofors case.

She has been silent but watchful of the developments within the party and that has paid off; she is exercising an influence disproportionate to any power she may wield—and all this without accountability.

In the past few months, she has obviously made her displeasure known about the way the party is being run by appearing to side with Mr Rao's critics. She is aware that she can get the support of the party at this stage while the section opposed to her "dare not" openly express its views.

There is, however, no doubt that if she does take the plunge she has to swim or sink in the dirt—a daunting prospect compared to remaining on the sidelines and operating from behind the scenes where she can still call the shots.

The most likely scenario is that the stalemate will continue, even if for no better reason than the fact that no one has the stomach to disturb it.

Survey Results

95AS0187C Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE in English 26 Dec 94 p 1

[Article by P.A. Rama Rao: "PV Still the Best Bet for Cong: Survey"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, Dec. 25—Despite the debacle suffered by the Congress-I in the South, a majority of the party MPs [Member of Parliament] perceived Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao as the best bet as a vote catcher with nearly 42 percent support.

This was revealed in a unique opinion poll among the Congress-I MPs conducted by the independent Centre for Media Studies (CMS), a leading opinion polling agency in the country. In all, 150 Congress-I MPs (mostly from Lok Sabha) have been personally interviewed in Delhi by experienced researchers on December 21 and 22.

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Among other party leaders, the contenders for prime ministership Mr Arjun Singh and Mr Sharad Pawar were mentioned as vote catchers, but with limited support.

The other highlights of the poll are: Nearly half (44) of the Congress MPs are worried about lack of charismatic leaders in the party to woo the electorate. Mrs Sonia Gandhi is seen as the saviour for the beleaguered party with elections in four States round-the-corner. Despite the drubbing the party received in South, the Congress MP's consider stability and economic reforms as key issues that will bring the party back to power in 1996. However, the Congress MPs are not much concerned about the corruption in the government.

Those who felt a leadership vacuum were asked who the potential vote catchers for Congress are and a vast majority of them mentioned Sonia Gandhi's name. Other names mentioned are that of Mr Arjun Singh, Mr Sharad Pawar, Mr N.D. Tiwari and Mr Rajesh Pilot.

It is apparent from the survey that none of the contenders for power can effect a change in leadership on their own strength, but the blessings of 10, Janpath can swing the turn of events in the party today.

Oddly enough, even Priyanka Gandhi's name has been mentioned by some MPs. Congress party's loyalty to the Gandhi family remains unshakened.

There has reportedly been a demand in the party to appoint a working president. CMS poll quizzed MPs whether they see a need for it. A majority of the MP's (55) replied in the negative, while about one-third preferred to have a working president and others were equanimous about the subject.

Those who saw a need for a working president were asked to mention their preferred leader. Mrs Sania Gandhi, Mr Arjun Singh, Mr Sharad Pawar, Mr N.D. Tewari and Mr Rajesh Pilot (in that order) were mentioned for the post.

Nearly one-third of Congress MPs refused to believe that the party has lost support among Muslims, while another one-third consider it a purely temporary phenomenon and as such, nothing needs to be done in this regard.

Only a third of MP's suggest a need for winning back support of Muslims and the suggestions include: Follow secular approach, call the bluff of opposition that Congress is anti-Muslim, reconstruct Masjid, better representation to Muslims in the party, change Congress leadership, and better educational and employment opportunities, etc., (in that order).

Asked us to what steps they propose to improve Congress party's electoral prospects, the MPs named stable government, implementation of economic reforms, fighting communalism as the major issues requiring action corruption which has stirred the conscience of the national and led to electoral reverses for the party is apparently not a major item on their agenda for action.

Majority of MPs are optimistic that the party will win the Lok Sabha election with a clear majority, while others expect the party to emerge as the single largest party and retain power at the Centre. Only a miniscule minority (two percent) expect the party to lose power after the 1996 Lok Sabha elections.

"The Congress MPs are clearly worried and confused lot today after the electoral reverses in South, but are not concerned as yet about the problems like corruption plaguing the party and government today," says Dr N. Bhaskara Rao, chairman, CMS and eminent political analyst.

Iran

Commentary Notes 'Right' To Use Nuclear Energy

LD2701142195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 27 Jan 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mikhail Demurin, the Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman, on 26 January, in a talk to reporters, described as baseless the American claims to the effect that the Islamic Republic of Iran is attempting to gain access to atomic weapons.

Referring to the signing of a $1 billion agreement between Iran and Russia earlier in January on the completion of the Bushehr power plant in south of Iran, Demorin said the plant reactors function by using water, and it is simply used for peaceful, and not military, purposes.

The agreement for the construction of two units of the Bushehr power plant was signed in 1974 with a German company. After the victory of the Islamic revolution, while the plant was near completion, the German contractor, followed by the German Government, officially expressed reluctance to complete the plant.

At present, the complementary operations of the plant are in progress in collaboration with Russian contractors, and under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which constantly controls the operations by sending delegations.

One of the reasons preventing the developing countries from achieving nuclear energy is the massive biased propaganda launched by Western countries, especially the United States, voicing fears over possibility of proliferation of nuclear weapons and overshadowing the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

However, knowledge and technology take no political boundary, and knowledge should be transmitted without prejudice. The Islamic Republic of Iran, possessing resources and the necessary competency for using scientific use [as heard] of nuclear energy, reserves the right to make use of nuclear energy.

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From the viewpoint of political analysts, one of the U.S. goals in accusing Iran of producing nuclear weapons is to mar the picture of the Islamic Republic of Iran at international and regional scales, and presenting the Middle East region as an insecure region.

The Zionist regime, which is also under pressure of regional and world countries because of possessing hundreds of atomic warheads, accuses Iran of producing atomic weapons in an attempt to cover up its own nuclear activities.

The experts of the IAEA, in their repeated inspections of Iran's nuclear installations, have not observed any sign of violation of regulations nor any cases of Iran's attempts to achieve atomic weapons.

Editorial Insists on Need for Nuclear Energy

NC2901113195 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 22 Jan 95 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "Political Determination in the Humanitarian Use of Nuclear Science"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Depriving the Islamic Republic of Iran of the achievements in nuclear science is one of the objectives of the spiteful propaganda by America and the Zionist regime." This was stated by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani in his speech inaugurating the agricultural and nuclear medicine research center of the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization [IAEO]. The president added: "Nuclear science has many benefits for humanity and the people of Iran should also benefit from it." In explaining this point, the president stated that Iran depends on imports to meet its needs in nuclear medicine, and that with the operation of the cyclotron center, we will not need to import but can even gradually become an exporter of this type of medicine.

Almost in tandem with the inauguration of this center, which is devoted to the humanitarian and beneficial use of nuclear energy, Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd of Britain warned the Foreign Affairs Commission of the House of Commons of Iran's intentions and pointed out that during the next 15 years Iran will acquire nuclear weapons. In parallel, some British newspapers, which are being fed by Zionist sources, repeated these allegations and referred to Iran as a "major threat." [passage omitted]

The president's emphasis on the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its efforts for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, especially in the field of medicine and agriculture, and that naturally the Iranian people should also be able to enjoy the many benefits of nuclear science is actually a reemphasis of the independent action and determination of Islamic Iran in safeguarding its rights and interests in this field. [passage omitted]

America and the Zionists are well aware that Iran has the necessary political determination to make peaceful use of nuclear science, especially in the fields of medicine, agriculture, and energy, hence their insistence on creating a poisonous propaganda atmosphere in the world and to obstruct the implementation of existing plans in Iran.

Let us not forget that work on the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant in which the Islamic Republic of Iran has invested 12 million Deutsch marks for energy production was obstructed following increased American pressures and that Siemens, the German side of the agreement, left this immense development project incomplete because of these pressures and on the explicit orders of the German Government. Nevertheless, the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to decisively insist on completing this immense development project and is striving toward this with the cooperation of Russia so that the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant will be completed as soon as possible.

The clear meaning behind this is that America and Israel have failed in their efforts to deprive the Islamic Republic of Iran of the achievements in the field of nuclear science, and although such inhuman propaganda may create obstacles, it cannot guarantee any success in the future.

But, at the same time, we should not forget that the world community has gradually come to realize that it is not in the interest of the world community and of the non-nuclear countries that have signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to surrender to the excessive demands and the discriminatory stands of a number of countries. But our main question is: Why do America and Israel act so impudently in increasing and expanding their nuclear arms while they insist that other countries be deprived of the peaceful use of nuclear energy for medicine, agriculture, and energy? This is a question that is gradually being asked by other countries as well.

Press on U.S. Reaction to Caspian Sea Oil Deal

LD2801124495 Tehran IRNA in English 1136 GMT 28 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 28, IRNA—Two English-language dailies Saturday [28 January] commented on a press release issued by the American Embassy in Baku Wednesday in which it voiced opposition to Iran's participation in an agreement signed by Azerbaijan and a consortium of Western oil companies.

"The statement included the threat that the American oil companies would boycott the contract in the event of Iran's participation," 'IRAN NEWS' wrote in its editorial.

The Azerbaijan Republic agreed in November to the transfer of five percent of the shares of the contract to the National Iranian Oil Company, the paper said.

Pointing to the American Embassy's hostile statement against Iran, the article noted, the following points are worth considering:

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So far no 'legal regime' has been defined concerning the Caspian Sea, and as long the five littoral states of the Caspian Sea have not collectively reached an agreement on ways of exploiting the subterranean reserves of the sea, no country can bring in other powers into the region, it underlined.

The paper said the contract has been concluded between the National Iranian Oil Company and the Azerbaijan Republic, and although the company is affiliated to the Petroleum Ministry, it is run in accordance with laws which govern the operations of private companies.

"As a matter of fact the company has concluded numerous contracts with American companies, such as Exxon and Texaco, which are daily buying hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil from the National Iranian Oil Company," the editorial said.

Political observers point out that contrary to the statement issued by the American Embassy in Baku, privately the American embassies have often expressed the opinion that from the security point of view investments of several billion dollars in Azerbaijan oil without the participation of Iran and Russia would be a mistake as most of the investments would have to be made in the Caspian Sea. "As a matter of fact", it said, "the American companies are anxious to be assured of the participation of Iran and Russia as both countries have extensive experience in oil production and exports."

The statement issued by the American Embassy is an outrageous insult to the Azerbaijan Government and an infringement on the national sovereignty of that country, the paper stressed.

However, IRAN NEWS wrote, the trip by Mehdi Husseini, director of exploration and member of the board of directors of the National Iranian Oil Company, to Baku at the invitation of Azeri officials, next Tuesday to follow up on the implementation of the contract, already exhibits the indifference of the Azerbaijan Government to the American statement.

Another daily, 'TEHRAN TIMES' in an article on the same subject wrote that a total of 80 percent of the funds are to be invested by the Western companies - Amoco Corp., Pennzoil Co., Unocal Corp. and British Petroleum.

The paper quoted the U.S. ambassador to Baku, Richard Miles as saying that the U.S. is concerned with what he called 'Iran's terrorist activities at the international level and Tehran's plans for the building of a nuclear bomb'.

"Notwithstanding the U.S. warning, the Azerbaijan Republic recently offered its remaining share of 25 percent to Iran," it said.

Commenting on the allegations against Iran such as Tehran's alleged support for terrorism and its intention to build a nuclear bomb, the TEHRAN TIMES quoted a senior Iranian official as saying that "these charges are baseless and carry no evidence and are not even worth a denial".

The article quoted the official who asked to be anonymous, as saying such a threat by the United States of withdrawal is nothing but a part of a continuing plot to push Iran into isolation.

"Washington failed in this goal and most of the countries which, in the past, cowered to hostile U.S. policy towards Iran are now pursuing their independent policies of developing ties with the Islamic Republic," the official was quoted as saying.

The daily quoted another informed source as saying that the U.S. made a secondary proposal that it would not object to Iranian participation as long as Tehran is a 'sleeping partner' in the project.

It was Russia which first demanded that the pipeline should cross its territory on its way carrying crude to markets outside of the landlocked caspian region, it said adding that, the consortium now wants to ship the crude oil via a new pipeline accross Iran and Turkey, but Russia has proposed its own Black Sea oil terminal at Novorossisk in order to have the lion's share in revenues and to gain physical control over the oil flow.

Observers believe that the project will go ahead with Iranian participation at 600,000 barrels of crude oil per day, it said.

"The United States threat is empty as there is big amount at stake for the Western consortium and the companies involved will not bow to Washington's pressure," TEHRAN TIMES quoted a diplomat from Central Asia as saying.

The oil issue, as usual, has become a political issue, with politics the main determinant in any decision as to whether the new pipeline to transport oil to Western markets should go through Russia, Turkey or Iran, economic considerations playing only second, the article added.

One Asian diplomat told the daily that Russia is pursuing a hard bargain and is insistent.

However, he said, during the Clinton-Yeltsin summit in Washington the issue of the pipeline crossing through Russian territory was dropped while still at the experts level and President Clinton refused to discuss.

"Of course, the U.S. would never agree to Iran's having control over the pipeline, but it has no alternative as Washington is secretly pursuing a policy of having the recently-independent states of the Central Asian republics economically, politically and even militarily free from the influence of Russia up to an extent," the diplomat noted.

He underlined that the U.S. knows very well the predominance of the Russian population in these republics and

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Russians holding key posts in their administration are the great obstacles in the way.

"A long strategy would definitely be worked out, but for that the U.S. has to be cautious," the paper quoted him as stressing.

Commenting on Iran, he remarked that the U.S. simply can not ignore this strategically-important country as its influence is felt in the entire region.

"Iran has always stood on its foreign policy of openness, and is ready to join hands with all its neighbors based on mutual interest and non-intereference," a key government official said.

The U.S. hue and cry about the Caspian oil deal, as in its past efforts to defeat Iranian interests, will amount to nothing but an empty threat, the daily quoted the official as concluding.

Azerbaijan Report: Iran Largest Trade Partner

LD3001143995 Tehran IRNA in English 1258 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku, Jan. 30, IRNA—Statistics released by the Azerbaijan Ministry of Foreign Trade indicate that Iran is the biggest trade partner of Azerbaijan.

Some 20.9 percent of Azerbaijan's foreign trade was done with the Islamic Republic of Iran during the 11 months up to the end of Nov. 1994.

Iran is handling some 45.9 percent of the total export and import activities of Azerbaijan and has left behind its other trade rivals.

Outside the CIS's main trade partners chart, Turkey with 14.4 percent, Britain with 11.2 percent and Germany with 5.2 percent are placed after Iran.

The main export items of Iran to Azerbaijan include foodstuff and other consumer commodities such as clothing, detergents, kitchen utensils and furniture.

Iran, in order to meet energy needs of the muslim people of the Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan, continued the export of energy to that republic last year.

UK Invites Central Bank To Begin Debt Talks

LD3001191295 Tehran IRNA in English 1618 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] London, 30, IRNA—The British Government's Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) has invited Iran's Central Bank to start formal negotiations on outstanding debts covered by official insurance.

At the same time, Credit Suisse of Switzerland has reportedly been appointed to organise and administer the payment of Iranian debts to British companies without cover.

The move effectively opens the way to reschedule overdue payments with Iran's fifth largest supplier and follows similar arrangements for much larger amounts made with Germany, Japan, Italy and France last year.

It also comes after Iranian banks in London have started to clear sums up to dlrs 250,000 to individual creditors, which had been delayed by up to two years and for letters of credit from March 1994 to be honored.

The ECGD offer of official negotiations follow preliminary talks in London in December, when "debts old and new" were said to be discussed.

No official figures have been released on the sums involved but are estimated to be up to dlrs 130 million in insured and reinsurenced business and a further dlrs 100 million in dispute since before the 1979 revolution.

A spokesman for the government's medium-term insurance agency said that he did not know whether the negotiations would take place in Tehran or London or when a date might be set in response to their letter written in mid-January.

In a separate development, Middle East Economic Digest (MEED) reported this week that Credit Suisse received a mandate on January 18 to work with Bank Mellat to administer uninsured debt repayments in a five-year rescheduling package.

The total sum involved was said to be up to dlrs 500 million with the first payments expected to be made on March 25. No fresh financing was included in the deal.

New Air Force Chief on Equipment Show, Future

LD3101120895 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 31 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Air Force Commander Brigadier General Habib Baqa'i this morning opened the seventh Fajr [Dawn] Air Force exhibition in Tehran. According to a report by our correspondent, aircraft and weapons of various kinds are on display at this exhibition, including modern F-14, F-15, F-5, F-4, and Sukhoi-26 jet fighters and fighter bombers, large and small 707 and C-130 cargo planes, Friendship and Falcon models, various makes of helicopters, defense equipment, ground-to-ground missiles, air-to-ground missiles, and the latest examples of the research projects undertaken by the Air Force's self-sufficiency jihad.

Our correspondent interviewed Brig. Gen. Baqa'i on the objective of this exhibition and future plans for the Air Force. We draw your attention to the text of this interview:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] What is the objective of opening this exhibition today?

[Baq'ai] To display the capabilities of the Air Force and to please the public when they see the equipment and

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possibilities at the disposal of the nation. They can also see how hard our boys work and I hope this will improve daily, God willing.

[Correspondent] You were recently appointed by the esteemed leader, the commander in chief of the Armed Forces [Ayatollah Khamene'i], as commander of the Air Force. What are your future plans for the Air Force?

[Baq'ai] I plan to complete the projects started by Martyr Sattari. Thanks to the instructions of the esteemed leader, we are all striving to make the Air Force fully equipped, independent, and self-sufficient. [end recording]

IRGC Ground Forces Commander Interviewed

NC2901093895 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 21 Jan 95 p 12

[Interview with Brigadier General Mohammad 'Ali Ja'fari, commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Ground Forces, by unidentified correspondent; date and place not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] After the end of the imposed war, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC] and especially its Ground Forces entered the scene of the country's reconstruction. Can you please give us some details about this?

[Ja'fari] In the name of God, the almighty and merciful. [passage omitted] Since the IRGC Ground Forces played a pivotal role in the eight years of sacred defence, which demanded a large part of the forces' capabilities and especially engineering skills, naturally it has been rich in its engineering potential. This is why it entered the scene of reconstruction.

The resources and potential of divisions and brigades, especially of the engineering brigade, were used and the Ground Forces undertook the responsibility to implement huge projects. Of course, all of the IRGC Ground Forces' potential and resources have not yet been used and we can offer three times as much as we are offering today.

Currently exceptional and immense projects, such as the construction of the huge Karkheh Dam, several highways such as the Tehran-Saveh highway, and a railway as well as of several large bridges, have been implemented by our hard-working personnel.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Where do the IRGC Ground Forces' currently stand as far as their readiness and military strength are concerned?

[Ja'fari] Thank God that under the aegis of the esteemed leader and thanks to the several years of persistent efforts by officials, the IRGC Ground Forces are in good condition.

Currently we have reconstructed a large part of our resources and have found the opportunity to complete the necessary training courses. We have maintained the experiences that we have gained in the war and are transferring this to the other forces. Our Ground Forces have been equipped with the most modern military materiel. On the whole, there is a good amount of readiness in the Ground Forces. I dare say that our dear country is not facing any weakness as far as defense and security are concerned and it is fully ready to confront any foreign or domestic threat or assault and to defend the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This has only been possible under the aegis of the sagacious leadership of the commander-in-chief, the devotion of our martyrs, and the selflessness of the families of our martyrs and of the Hezbollah people.

As far as the training of the IRGC Ground Forces is concerned, the three colleges that offer armored, artillery, and ground training have offered effective services and a large number of officers are being trained in these colleges.

Also, we are in the process of implementing a plan on conforming the training of the other personnel so that we can meet their needs as well. Another important achievement by the IRGC Ground Forces this year has been the recruitment of officers and NCO's and the first group of Ground Forces officers will be admitted to the IRGC cadet school.

The NCO's too are being trained and it is hoped that after their training, they will be able to meet some of the forces' needs.

The Ground Forces have 15 recruitment and employment centers throughout the country that will continue to operate in the coming year, too.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] How effective do you think the plot by world arrogance against Iran can be?

[Ja'fari] Of course, it is only natural for many plots to exist against the Islamic Republic of Iran. But because of the readiness of the Armed Forces and the sagacious measures taken by the esteemed leader, all plots are being thwarted.

Here I would like to quote the beautiful words of the esteemed commander-in-chief, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, may his shadow be lengthened, that the IRGC is like a strong door or a strong bastion for this revolution and this country; and if this door is opened or if this door did not exist, it is very clear what wou'd have happened to this country and to this revolution. This is the best definition of the role of the IRGC in the country's security.

Recently the heroic Iranian people witnessed the presence of American and some other arrogant forces in the Persian Gulf. This presence has a direct link to Iran. They wanted to create a great many problems inside the country. But once again, this plot was suppressed and thwarted. And this was made possible only under the

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aegis of the readiness of the Armed Forces and the alertness of the esteemed commander-in-chief. [passage omitted]

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Please explain the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC] Ground Forces' role in establishing security and confronting insurgents, as well as in neutralizing plots by world arrogance and its elements.

[Ja'fari] Actually, when it comes to the establishment of security, the IRGC Ground Forces is the country's sole military organ that directly confronts aggressors on the borders and domestic threats inside the country.

After the imposed war when the security conditions in our country changed and our enemies lost hope in their direct and face-to-face war with the Islamic revolution, they started to engineer their counter-security plans and plots in another form, and they actually realized that they should inflict blows on the system, the revolution, and the Islamic rule from inside the country. They tried to create domestic unrest or to pave the grounds for a cultural onslaught to achieve their ends. For this reason, and in view of the enemies' new plots, the IRGC Ground Forces undertook the direct responsibility of safeguarding security. In other words, the IRGC Ground Forces were assigned the duty of confronting the enemies who intended to upset the calm in sensitive areas and to reestablish security, next to the Law-Enforcement Forces [LEF].

Under normal or semi-normal conditions when a crisis has not yet intensified, our LEF brothers can enter the scene with their training, their arms, and their resources. But in some areas and under certain circumstances when security conditions reach the so-called red-alert stage and things become critical, naturally other forces also should enter the scene.

This role in the new security and defense structure in our country's Armed Forces has been assigned to the IRGC Ground Forces, which enter the scene under critical and extreme security conditions.

Our Hezbollah ummah definitely knows that because of the conditions that existed before the revolution on the routes used by smugglers in the southeast, in Sistan va Baluchestan province and in Kerman, the grounds for unrest existed. This situation continued and expanded after the revolution, with the help of regional mercenary countries and enemies, and the extent of unrest intensified. When the imposed war started and the IRGC and basijis were sent to the country's western and southern borders, the enemies exploited the situation that had arisen and exacerbated unrest, so much so that in 1369 and 1370 [1990-1991] an extremely critical situation existed in the Sistan va Baluchestan area—a situation that was totally intolerable. And in 1371 [1992], following the emphasis that the esteemed leader and other officials placed on the issue, the IRGC Ground Forces were assigned the duty to neutralize the insecurity and crisis that existed in the southeastern areas of the country. Thank God, with divine help and next to our LEF brothers, this mission too—like all other missions assigned to the IRGC—was successfully completed.

In this mission, the brave personnel of the 41th Sarallah Division from Kerman province played the key role and were able to mop up many areas of insurgents.

In Kerman province and namely in Kahnuj—an area between Sistan va Baluchestan province—large-scale operations were recently carried out in a number of villages to free the disgusted people from the insurgents who were treating them like slaves. The brave personnel of the 41st Sarallah Division carried out a coordinated operation against the insurgents and freed the people from the hellish conditions in which they were living.

In the north, in the Kordestan area, which our dear people know has been an insecure area for a long time, counterrevolutionary elements had been upsetting our dear compatriots' security.

Of course, in the years 1361 and 1362 [1982-1983], the IRGC and the Armed Forces were able to push counterrevolution out of the northwestern areas. But during the imposed war, these elements once again seized the opportunity that had arisen and created unrest in some areas.

However, after the acceptance of UN Resolution in 1992, once again the IRGC Ground Forces were assigned the duty of re-establishing security in Kordestan. Thank God during the past couple of years and with the help of the people in that region, we have been able to carry out successful operations and to return security to the area.

Currently one of the major steps that we have taken in northwestern Kordestan is controlling our own borders, since this control can have direct and effective security impacts on the Kordestan area and the entire country.

All these are steps that the combatants of the IRGC Ground Forces and the brave children of the Hezbollah ummah have taken and they are doing their best, day and night, in these areas to establish security in the country. We have given martyrs in this path and we pray that God will reward the families of these martyrs for their sacrifices.

At any rate, the IRGC Ground Forces are striving to establish security throughout the country so that our dear compatriots can continue with the reconstruction programs in a tranquil and calm atmosphere. [passage omitted]

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] What are the IRGC Ground Forces' future plans?

[Ja'fari] Next to its organizational programs and its missions, the IRGC Ground Forces also has another major duty—expanding the Ground Forces. [passage omitted]

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I pray for the success of all the dear brothers in the IRGC grounds forces and in the other IRGC forces, and pray to God almighty to prolong the life of the esteemed leader and commander-in-chief.

May God's peace and blessings be upon you.

'Precautionary' Border Measures Being Taken

LD3001221495 Tehran IRNA in English 1924 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 30, IRNA—Interior Minister, 'Ali Mohammad Besharati said here on Monday [30 January] that Iran has succeeded in preventing regional tension from entering the country by taking effective precautionary measures and employing sufficient police force at the borders.

Speaking in a press conference, Besharati said the law enforcement forces have blocked the entry routes and passages on the eastern and northwestern border areas through setting up border posts, embankments or digging channels.

He said the government's development plans are underway in the northwestern parts of the country and that the area was more secure today than any time in the past. The sea borders too have been made secure, he added.

Besharati said that this year (to end March 20), over 110 tons of illicit drugs have been intercepted, and police have arrested 50,000 people involved in drug trafficking.

On the efficiency of the police force, he said police in Iran were equipped with telecommunications and a computerized system to deal with the wrongdoers especially motor-car thieves.

On urban development, he said the budget for urban development for the coming fiscal year was likely to be more than the rls 2,000 billion [rials] allotted this year.

Asked about the damages inflicted recently by the floods in Khuzestan Province, southern Iran, he said rls. 306 billion has been paid to the effected people and the Interior Ministry has plans to pay rls. 350 billion more to alleviate the sufferings.

He said three million refugees from 60 countries are living in Iran and despite the domestic problems, the government cooperates with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

On repatriation of Afghan refugees, he said classified the Afghans into three categories as: those with permanent cards and permission to stay in Iran, those who hold temporary cards that could be renewed at the end of the year, and those who entered the country illegally and are to be dealt according to the law.

Besharati said Tehran's 19 kms long subway system, will be put into operation by 1375 (1996-1997).

Asked about the law on forming parties or political groups, he said 70 political parties and trade unions have obtained licence from the Interior Ministry and that any group not opposed to the Islamic Republic of Iran and its constitution will be issued a licence.

Majles Urges Enforcement Against Illegal Imports

LD3001100095 Tehran IRNA in English 0930 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 30, IRNA—186 representatives of the Islamic Consultative Assembly in a letter to President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani called on him to equip the law enforcement forces to implement the anti-smuggling law. The mps [as received] also called on the president to ask the law enforcement forces to confiscate the unauthorized goods and to take serious measures in respect to the offenders in accordance to the existing laws throughout the country.

By taking such action and restricting the smuggling of goods, a considerable amount of foreign exchange would be retrieved to the country. The fluctuation in the rate of foreign exchange would also be prevented, said the letter.

Thanking the government for its services, the representatives said that their call was aiming at reducing demand for foreign exchange.

The letter also said that it was high time for the government to fight the illegal import of luxurious goods for the protection of domestic production. This will also facilitate collection of taxes on the transaction made by about dlrs. 3-5 billion which is in circulation out of the banking system.

Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri on Domestic Issues

NC2801123495 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 16 Jan 95 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Nateq-Nuri by ABRAR editorial staff in Tehran on 14 January]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [ABRAR] Your Excellency, you are considered to be among those who support the founding of political groups in the country and who believe that this is one of the requirements of democratic freedom in the country. In view of this, is it possible that Your Excellency will join one of the political groups? It is also being said that you and some of your friends and associates are thinking of forming a political group.

[Nateq-Nuri] First of all, I want to thank you gentlemen for coming to the Majles and to extend my congratulations on the birthday of the Mahdi, may God expedite his advent.

In a country like ours, where free and popular elections in their true sense are held every so often—Majles

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elections, presidential elections, elections for the members of the Council of Experts, elections for the councils, the law on which has been passed—a country in which elections mean a lot and the people are present on the scene and have the freedom to make political decisions on issues concerning the management of the system and the country, there definitely should be political formations. Individuals cannot deal with problems on their own, and this is why they form groups that can do specialized work for the people and in which the people can trust. These groups can carry out propaganda activities. Therefore, I think that this is something that is necessary in every free society, especially in our society in which all the people are present on the scene.

The second part of your question is whether my associates and I are thinking of forming a new group or if I am thinking of joining a specific group. The answer is that we do not have any party at all. The Tehran Militant Clergy [TMC], where I am a member of the Central Council, is a party in one sense. Although the TMC plays a paternal role in our society, in our system and in our ideology where religion is not separate from politics, religious groups are also political groups. You see that from the very outset of the revolution and even before the revolution, the TMC issued statements, invited the people to be present on the scene and to participate in the marches and in the Tasu'a's and 'Ashura's before the revolution. The people took to the streets when these statements were issued. After the victory of the revolution, too, you have seen how the TMC has had a political presence all along. Therefore, we are a group and I am a member of its Central Council.

[ABRAR] Of course, we were speaking about a political party.

[Nateq-Nuri] Our party is a political party too.

[ABRAR] Strictly political. We have heard that you intend to form a new political formation.

[Nateq-Nuri] No. If we are able to run the TMC well, we will have achieved a great deal.

[ABRAR] We know that our revolution has always been the target of political, military, and cultural onslaughts by its enemies and opponents. Fortunately the enemies have never been able to succeed. But during the past few years they have created problems for us in the economic field and we are facing numerous problems in the fields of foreign investments in Iran and the escape of capital. This situation has been continuing for 17 years now. Also, our people are facing inflation. Do you think that in the Second Plan, the government will be able to overcome these problems and are there specific plans that can help us to overcome these and other problems in other fields?

[Nateq-Nuri] Of course, it is our enemies who say that we have failed. But even the most developed countries envisage a percentage of failure in their plans, and they never expect all their plans to be fulfilled 100 percent. Our First Plan, too, is no exception to this rule. It was implemented, but we did not reach our objectives in all the fields that we had envisaged. But we cannot say that we did not succeed.

[ABRAR] What I meant was that we did not achieve everything that we planned.

[Nateq-Nuri] Yes, we did achieve some things, but not 100 percent. A few days ago in an interview with a newspaper, I told the correspondent: I am not telling you this because you are a correspondent and want to write things. But what I believe—and I have stated this in private, public, open and closed meetings—is that only when we visit the provinces do we realize what things have been done. We are uninformed about most of the things that have been done. That is, when a person goes out and sees the volume of work that has been done, it is then that he realizes what has been achieved. [passage omitted]

[ABRAR] Probably I was unclear. As you said, it is truly a source of pride for each Iranian who sees the investments that have been made in infrastructure projects. But the tangible things that we see today and things which the enemies constantly harp on are, first of all, the unwillingness of investors to invest in production because of the changes that we constantly make every couple of years in our economic laws. This results in the flight of the private sector's capital from the country. The necessary steps should be taken to solve this problem. Is there any plan to do so and does the Majles intend to do anything?

[Nateq-Nuri] I agree that security is necessary for investment in the country and to attract domestic and foreign investments, because an investor always calculates where his money should be invested and what returns his investment will have. That is logical. An investor must be able to have good returns on his capital in order to invest in the development of the country. Definitely he needs security. But let us not forget that we are living in a country where a revolution has taken place and that we have been at war for more than half of the 15 years since the revolution. It was only natural for there to have been problems before the war, too, because a revolution had just taken place and because the former ruling system was based on dependence on America. And by the time the problems were in the process of being solved, the war broke out. Again, some time is required for the problems that stemmed from the war to be solved. I think that what happened was quite predictable. But we should definitely try to create security.

I believe that this is what should be done. Since we did not have a great deal of security, one of the fields in the First Five-Year Plan in which we failed was privatization. Propaganda is also to blame for this. However, when people living abroad who do not know what to do with their capital visit Iran and see the conditions, they will realize that things are not like what they hear.

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Therefore, part of the problem stems from the fact that we have not been able to give a clear picture of the situation in the country to people abroad.

[ABRAR] What is the reason for this?

[Nateq-Nuri] We have always been poor at propaganda. This is the same problem which the imam, may his soul be sanctified, always emphasized, saying that we lack the ability to tell about what we do. But what we have done—in answer to your question—is that in the Second Five-Year Plan we are counting largely on the issue of privatization as one of the country's three main economic pillars, as stated in the constitution. We regard the three pillars—the public sector, the cooperative sector, and the private sector—in such a way as to maintain a balance among the three. [passage omitted]

[ABRAR] One of the special characteristics of the fourth term of the Majles is that it is moving toward the implementation of law. The most important characteristic of this Majles is good supervision over the enforcement of laws. We see that whenever there are shortcomings in enforcing the law anywhere in the Executive Branch, the official in charge is summoned to the Majles. I would like Your Excellency's views on two issues. One is the issue of impeachment, which is the legal right of the Majles, and the other is the issue of the recent impeachment by the Majles. Of course, there is no doubt that you are a supporter of the government. But it seems that Your Excellency also wanted to support the impeached person.

[Nateq-Nuri] As you have pointed out, one of the things which the fourth Majles is proud of is its supervisory duties, since the Majles has two missions: One is legislation and the other is supervision over the enforcement of laws by the Executive Branch. Fortunately the Majles has carried out its supervisory duties well. [passage omitted]

One of the instruments that we use in our supervisory duties is the impeachment of ministers or the cabinet as far as the implementation of the Constitution is concerned. I myself have two functions. One is my function as a deputy, in which naturally I have the right to vote in favor or against a bill, to grant or not to grant a vote of confidence to a minister, and to make decisions like the other deputies. The other is my capacity as speaker, in which I have vowed to be impartial and to carefully observe Majles regulations. I have vowed to do this and it is my duty. In the recent impeachment by the Majles, what aroused doubts was the interpretation of two articles in the Majles regulations. [passage omitted]

[ABRAR] As you know, the press in a country defines the cultural and political lines of a country. What is important in the press is independence. On the basis of a UN report, press circulation in Iran should be 6 million. But we are still very far from this figure. As an independent person, what is your view on the press?

[Nateq-Nuri] In a country where Islamic democracy and Islam rules, we should procure the necessary instruments to help the society's cultural and mental maturity. I believe that the better the people understand things and the more they mature, the better it is for the Islamic system, the more it will help the system to flourish, and the easier it will make the management of this system. [passage omitted]

I do accept that the press should be independent and not under the yoke or diktat of anyone. This independence should definitely exist in a newspaper or publication.

Another point is that of criticism in society, which stems from the independence that we have talked about. Criticism never harms society. If criticism is healthy and well-intended, it can truly help to overcome problems. [passage omitted]

March to Russian Embassy Protests Chechnya

LD2701202895 Tehran IRNA in English 1939 GMT 27 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan, 27, (IRNA)--A protest march was staged towards the Russian Embassy here today following the Friday prayers at Tehran University campus.

The worshippers and students who took part in the rally issued a resolution calling on Islamic countries to support the Muslims of the caucasus Republic of Chechnya.

The resolution called on heads of Islamic states not to sacrifice the goals of the Islamic ummah for their own petty interests by being silent and indifferent towards the rights of Muslims.

It called on Russian officials to heed the philosophical advice of the great awakener of the century, Imam Khomeyni, and safe themselves from the political snares of American imperialism.

Sri Lanka

Government Approves Iranawilla VOA Relay Station

BK3101024495 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 25 Jan 95 p 7

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo—The Sri Lankan Government has signed an agreement with the United States giving the green light for establishment of the controversial Voice Or America (VOA) relay station on the western coast of the island. India, which strongly objected to the station In the late 1980s, has now withdrawn its opposition.

"The previous Government had signed an agreement with the United States in 1983 and an amended agreement 13 days before the general election. The real problem is there was no transparency. People were not

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told what the agreement was and that led to speculation" Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar told newspersons on Tuesday.

The United National Party Government updated the original 1955 agreement with the United States in 1983, allowing VOA to build four 500-kilowatt shortwave receiving and broadcasting transmitters and two 250-kilowatt transmitters in an 1000 acre site in the western coastal town of Iranawilla.

The Government signed a fresh document 13 days before the August 16 1994 general election reducing the land allocation to 500 acres and the US Government promised to increase the original $2.1 million grant by $500000. The agreement also added new safeguards, which allowed Sri Lanka Government personnel to inspect the site and subjected the radio frequencies to International Telecommunication Union standards.

The Indian Government strongly objected to the agreement saying the relay station will be used as a listening station by American intelligence organisations and as a communications centre for American submarines in the Indian Ocean. New Delhi used the separatist war in the north and the east to force Colombo into promising withdrawal of the VOA facility, as part of the 1987 Indo-Lanka accord.

"The Indian Government has not expressed any reservations about us going ahead with the project. The relations between New Delhi and Washington is not the same as it was then," Mr Kadirgamar said.

In the early 1990s, the Catholic Church in the western coast, supported by a coalition of activists, launched a massive campaign against the project saying it was a secret listening post and would make Sri Lanka a target in a nuclear war. The protest forced the People's Alliance (PA) to promise that it would abolish the deal if it came to power.

"I must say frankly that some of the PA members promised to cancel the project during the election campaign. This was because the previous Government did not release the agreement to public scrutiny," the Foreign Minister said.

The PA Government appointed a four-member Cabinet subcommittee, headed by the Foreign Minister, to recommend what action should be taken. The committee has recommended extra safeguards, reduction of land allocation from 500 acres to 409 acres, mutual monitoring of radioactive emission, unrestricted fishing activity in the nearly [as published] river, and regular inspection of the project.

"We had a discussion with the leaders of the campaign and explained the details of the agreement. We have taken their concerns into account in renegotiating the deal with the US," the Foreign Minister said.

A representative of the protest movement said that they have agreed to end the campaign after talks with the Cabinet subcommittee. "Right now we have to accept this as the most practical solution. The United States can put a lot of pressure on the Government," Bernard Edirisinghe of the Social and Economic Development Centre, a member of the umbrella group that led the agitation, said.

The agreement comes just a week before Mr Kadirgamar and Trade Minister C V Gooneratne [title as published] visit Washington in an attempt to persuade the US to increase the garment quota to Sri Lanka.

The US buys 60 per cent of the exported garments, which is the country's biggest foreign exchange earner.

Foreign, Industrial Ministers Depart for U.S.

BK3101023095 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 30 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar and Industrial Development Minister Clement Gooneratne left for the U.S.A. yesterday. The two ministers said the main purpose of their 12-day tour is to canvass support for enhanced quotas for Sri Lankan garment export to the United States. Mr. Gooneratne said 60 percent of Sri Lankan garment exports were to the U.S. at present. The quotas granted by U.S. have increased by around 16 percent annually, but he expected a higher allocation this year.

Minister Kadirgamar said he will take this opportunity to further cement the friendship and cooperation between the two countries by meeting U.S. Government leaders, officials, and congressional leaders. He would also try to promote more U.S. investment in Sri Lanka in the light of the new Iranawila-VOA agreement in which the U.S. has undertaken to develop the area around Iranawila station [through] U.S. investors.

LTTE Demands Dismantling of Military Camp

BK2801110095 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0650 GMT 28 Jan 95

["Pool Item"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, 28 Jan—Although the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] is now suddenly insisting on the dismantling of the military camp at Pooneryn, it had earlier wanted only that this camp be moved away from the main Pooneryn-Sangupiddy-Jaffna road.

Official sources told LANKAPUVATH Friday [27 January] that the LTTE spokesman, Anton Balasingham, had in November 1993 written a letter to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR, stating that the LTTE only wanted the Pooneryn camp moved one mile away from the main road. This was at a time when efforts were being made through the UNHCR

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to open a land route between Jaffna and mainland Sri Lanka. The government has offered to move the camp 500 metres from the main road.

Pilgrims who had come down to Colombo from Jaffna to attend the papal mass in Colombo last week had told officials that they were not interested in the dismantling of the Pooneryn or any other military camp. All they sought was an overland passage from the Jaffna peninsula to the Sri Lankan mainland. They had said they were not interested in a separate state. All they wanted was peace and ethnic harmony.

The sources said that the ball was now firmly in the LTTE court to respond to the People's Alliance government's peace initiative and get down to discussing without delay, the government's political package to end the ethnic conflict, as this was the main item on the peace talks agenda. The sources pointed out that the genuineness of the (?words indistinct] government led by President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga had been acknowledged and commended both nationally and internationally. The hand of peace had been extended and the LTTE accepted the fact that this government, unlike the previous ones, had a concrete plan to end the ethnic conflict.

The government had agreed to withdraw the Pooneryn military camp 500 metres from the main road. Official sources said it was unfair on the part of the LTTE to try to exploit the government's genuine desire for peace by making more and more demands and placing obstacles to the speedy settlement of the problem.

The Sri Lankan Government for its part, has lifted the embargo on a large number of goods and even sent special shipments of medical supplies to the North. It has also offered a Rs. [rupees] 40 billion reconstruction and rehabilitation package to develop the Northern and Eastern provinces. Pooneryn is a junction located on the main [words indistinct] Mannar-Jaffna highway in mainland Sri Lanka's northern Kilinochchi District. It is linked to the Jaffna peninsula by a ferry which is now not in use.

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